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ABSTRACT

This report analyzes the administration of student financial aid programs in Florida's state universities and community colleges. The analysis was conducted by reviewing documents, receiving public testimony, conferring with state-level agencies and institutions, surveying directors of financial aid offices, and surveying students. An introductory chapter presents the legislative charge leading to the report and historical perspectives on Florida student financial aid. A chapter on state-level coordination of financial aid describes the work of the state Office of Student Financial Aid, Board of Regents, State Board of Community Colleges, Florida Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors, and Bureau for Career Development Services. A discussion of factors influencing financial aid administration focuses on sources and types of financial aid, student characteristics, institutional characteristics, and financial aid staff. A chapter on financial aid administration covers organizational structure and personnel, staff training, staff salary and compensation levels, automation of financial aid services, funding, and service to students. Twenty-two recommendations are presented concerning the role of state-level offices in the administration of student financial aid, institutional financial aid office staff, program administrative concerns, automation of financial aid offices, and service to students. Survey results are appended and 12 references are attached. (JDD)

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The Postsecondary Education Planning Commission, initially created by executive order in 1980 and subsequently given statutory authority, serves as an advisory body to the State Board of Education on all postsecondary education matters. The Commission is composed of 11 members of the general public and one full-time student registered at a postsecondary education institution in Florida. Members are appointed by the Governor with the approval of three members of the State Board of Education and subject to confirmation by the Senate.

The major responsibility of the Commission is preparing and updating every five years a master plan for postsecondary education. The enabling legislation directed that the Plan "shall include consideration of the promotion of quality, fundamental educational goals, programmatic access, needs for remedial education, regional and state economic development, demographic patterns, student demand for programs, needs of particular subgroups of the population, implementation of innovative educational techniques and technology, and the requirements of the labor market. The capacity of existing programs, in both public and independent institutions, to respond to identified needs shall be evaluated and a plan shall be developed to respond efficiently to unmet needs."

Other responsibilities include recommending to the State Board of Education program contracts with independent institutions; advising the State Board regarding the need for and location of new programs, branch campuses and centers of public postsecondary education institutions; reviewing public postsecondary education budget requests for compliance with the State Master Plan; recommending to the Commissioner of Education proposals for support through the Postsecondary Cooperation Trust Fund; and periodically evaluating the State's 28 regional coordinating councils for vocational education, adult general education and community instructional services.

Further information about the Commission, its publications, meetings and other activities may be obtained from the Commission office, 210 Collins Building, Department of Education, Tallahassee, Florida, 32399-0400; telephone (904) 488-7894.

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PLANNING COMMISSION

STUDENT FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATION IN PUBLIC COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Prepared in Response to Specific Appropriation 587
of the
1989 General Appropriations Act
Chapter 89-253, Laws of Florida

1990 - Report 1

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Legislature, through proviso to Specific Appropriation 587 of the 1989 General Appropriations Act, directed the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission to conduct an analysis of the administration of student financial aid programs in state universities and community colleges. Proviso language further stated that the analysis should examine "organizational structure; number, classification and compensation of staff, to include student employees; workload requirements; the process of applying for and receiving financial aid; work measures; and other issues related to the administration of this function." A report and recommendations were to be submitted to the State Board of Education and Legislature by February 1, 1990.

The Chairman assigned responsibility for this study to the Program Committee under the chairmanship of Robert Kerrigan and included Commissioners Thomas Heath, Donald Kahn, Tully Patrowicz, and Robert Stern. The Committee conducted five meetings between September 1989 and February 1990 to discuss information and documents collected, receive public testimony, and review draft materials. There was extensive participation by State-level agencies and institutions relative to this study. Participants included the Office of Student Financial Assistance, the Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors, the Board of Regents, and the State Board of Community Colleges. In particular, the directors of financial aid offices in the State's nine public universities and 28 community colleges provided essential data on their operations and responded to draft materials. Student representation was secured through site visits and interviews on campus as well as through responses to a survey questionnaire.

The administration of financial aid programs has grown increasingly complex over the years. A number of factors common to the administrative aspect of financial aid programs across the nation have contributed to this situation. First, the growing number of aid sources, diverse types of financial aid, and related verification and validation requirements affect the administration of these programs. Validation of data on student financial aid applications has been an increasingly important responsibility of institutional financial aid offices. Characteristics of students served within the institution and the State also impact the administration of these programs. These characteristics include socioeconomic level, part-time or full-time enrollment, and need for remedial courses. Third, institutional characteristics such as diversity in academic programs, student enrollment, graduate programs, public or private, residential or commuter, and urban or rural missions are important to the total administration of aid. Also, the size and characteristics of the financial aid office staff are important components in financial aid program administration. While the number of professional and support staff working with the programs is central to efficient and effective program administration, other issues related to personnel include preparation and experience, longevity in the position, job satisfaction, and turnover.

Information on the organizational structure and personnel in Florida's public postsecondary institutions showed that, compared to national data, staffing levels in the universities and some community colleges were reasonable while a number of the community colleges appeared to be understaffed. Special appropriations since 1982-83 to enhance staffing of university student

financial aid offices were influential in strengthening staffing levels. Staffing deficiencies in several of the community colleges, however, could be a major contributor to administrative problems. One questionable aspect of staffing across both systems was the use of work/study students in financial aid offices. Work/study students often occupy positions where they are the first point of contact for students who go into the aid office for information on their applications as well as for general orientation.

Staff training was a second area examined in Florida's public institutions. Constant changes in programs and in their criteria as well as in federal and state policies require continual access to updating for employees in order to properly counsel applicants and evaluate their applications. Job orientation and training for new employees has rested almost exclusively in procedures manuals and in-house seminars or workshops. Few institutions used audio/video tapes or training sessions developed by professional associations and organizations.

A recurrent issue in discussions with financial aid directors was the difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified counselors and aid evaluators. In addition to job-related stress produced by the nature of the tasks involved with financial aid program administration, compensation levels have not been competitive. Community college salaries for counselors were 15 percent below the estimated national median for similar institutions and university counselor salaries were 19 percent below the median.

Automation of financial aid services was another issue in this study. The level of automation varied considerably across institutions, with universities generally reporting more automated tasks than community colleges. Most of the universities were at least somewhat automated in most of the tasks identified, and, overall, universities ranked their current level of automation as serving their needs either very well or moderately well. Community college directors reported far less automation of selected tasks. At least half of the colleges had no automation for nine of the tasks. None of the community college financial aid directors reported their current level of automation served their needs very well. For ten directors, their level of automation did not serve them very well, while five directors believed they were poorly served by their existing level of automation.

Funding for financial aid offices offices is provided within the general operating budget of each institution. Additional support is often available through other administrative areas such as the registrar's and admissions offices. Further administrative support is provided to SUS institutions through the student financial aid fee assessed on tuition and matriculation fees. The universities may use up to 15 percent of the fees collected to pay for administrative costs associated with the administration of financial aid programs. Community colleges also assess the financial aid fee but are presently prohibited from using the funds for direct or indirect administrative purposes or salaries.

In addition to the issues identified above, a final area reviewed was service to students. Access to services and students' level of satisfaction with access was not uniform across the university and community college systems. Community college students were generally more satisfied with services than

were university students. Service to special subpopulations varied. Many of the colleges provided aid information through special projects or strategies to racial/ethnic minorities while all of the universities did so. Most institutions did not provide special service to other groups such as the disabled, evening, and part-time students. Few institutions had personnel designated to serve these subgroups. Overall, community college students tended to rate staff higher than university students did in terms of courtesy, helpfulness, and knowledge.

The Commission endorsed the following specific recommendations based upon the findings of the administration of student financial aid study.

Recommendations:

1. **The Office of Student Financial Assistance should maintain at least one staff position that is dedicated to research and long-range planning.** The comprehensive collection and analysis of financial aid data as well as long-range planning for those programs administered by the Office should be conducted within the context of other sources of student assistance.

2. **The Office of Student Financial Assistance should assess its current practices and level of consultation with directors of aid programs.** During public hearings, directors of financial aid offices and representatives of the Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors testified that they were not kept well informed by OSFA, particularly in relation to the implementation of new or modified procedures. Since the Director of the State Office of Financial Assistance now meets quarterly with the Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors and the Council is comprised of representatives of public and private postsecondary education institutions and of students, OSFA should involve the Council to the fullest extent possible in discussions concerning procedural and programmatic changes in financial aid prior to implementation of such changes.

3. **The Chancellor of the State University System should designate a staff person within the central office to coordinate student affairs, including financial aid concerns.** Institutional financial aid directors should utilize this individual as a resource in representing their collective concerns at the system level.

4. **The Division of Community Colleges should maintain a data base sufficient to provide information on administrative and staff personnel, administrative units, and individual student financial aid awards.**

5. **The Division of Community Colleges should designate one individual as a liaison between the Division and the institutions to coordinate student affairs, including student financial aid, and to provide guidance and oversight at the system level.** This individual should actively participate in

the newly created Financial Aid Commission in the Florida Association of Community Colleges.

6. **The State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) should direct the colleges to report on their staffing levels in the financial aid office.** If adequate personnel are not in place to administer aid programs in an efficient, timely, and correct manner, the SBCC should address these needs as a budget issue. The SBCC should monitor the institutions and their efforts to improve the level of staff support in financial aid offices.

7. **Florida student financial aid policy should allow community colleges to utilize up to 15 percent of the funds generated by their student financial aid fee for administrative costs associated with administration of financial aid programs.** Administrative expenditures from this source should not reduce the amount available for need-based aid. Although institutions should have the flexibility of assigning these funds on the basis of their individual needs, in no instance should the monies designated for program administration from the financial aid fee supplant funds previously dedicated to the administration of student financial aid at the college.

8. **Salary levels of personnel in student financial aid offices in public colleges and universities should be raised as appropriate to reflect the level of responsibility as well as the professional and academic credentials required for employment.**

9. **The Board of Regents should revise the University Support Personnel System plan to provide more flexibility within the plan for career ladder opportunities.** Such modifications should recognize and reward skills and abilities gained through training and experience. Step increases may be a viable option. The current restructuring initiative to establish a Coordinator class within the Administrative and Professional plan is laudable as it will provide an entry-level professional position in the financial aid office. The need remains, however, to address the career ladder issue for financial aid office employees classified under the USPS plan.

10. **The State should recognize that financial aid office staff training needs exceed those of many other institutional units and additional efforts should be made available to provide timely, appropriate, and adequate pre-service and in-service training opportunities.**

11. **As the designated State-level agency charged with providing training, the Office of Student Financial Assistance should expand its efforts in coordinating state-wide training for student financial aid personnel.** Commercially or locally prepared training materials should be made available by the Office of Student Financial Assistance in cooperation with the

Florida Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators to all student financial aid offices. For example, financial aid office personnel should have access to pre-service and in-service training activities that incorporate human relations and communications components. The Department of Education should seek appropriate funding to support such training efforts within the Office of Student Financial Assistance.

12. **The Department of Education should recommend guidelines to standardize and generally simplify student financial aid program criteria and other requirements, including application deadlines.** Once guidelines are developed, the Department of Education should act to consolidate, with the assistance of the Legislature, existing aid programs that are similar in nature. These guidelines should also be used when new State administered student financial aid programs are under consideration to discourage the establishment of new programs when they can be consolidated with existing ones.

13. **Legislation establishing new student financial aid programs should allow for a one-year lead-in period to provide State and local administrators time to disseminate information on a new program and to provide adequate time to implement administrative processes at State and institutional levels.** Prior to establishing new programs, consideration should be given to incorporating new objectives within existing programs.

14. **Those community colleges that assess the student financial aid fee should consider allocating funds from this account to provide financial aid relief for students who meet requirements for Florida Student Assistance Grants but who seek admission following closure of the FSAG program qualifying period.**

15. **Funds collected through the student financial aid fee should be disbursed to students as financial assistance as quickly as possible.**

16. **The Office of Student Financial Assistance, in cooperation with the Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors, the Board of Regents, and the State Board of Community Colleges should develop a plan by July 1, 1990 for the improvement of the administration of the Florida Student Assistance Grant program.** Among the areas addressed should be: a plan to pilot test a decentralized FSAG program among a sample of public and private community colleges and universities, electronic transfer of selected student record information, differential application dates, and paperwork reduction. Also, among the issues examined, the plan should consider the feasibility of identifying within the Florida Student Assistance Grant a separate or subprogram for public universities and another for community colleges. Careful consideration should be given to the ramifications of separate programs, including proper monitoring of program administration.

17. **The Articulation Coordinating Committee, which has oversight responsibility for the Florida Automated System for Transferring Education Records (F.A.S.T.E.R.), should develop plans to implement the electronic transfer of student financial aid transcripts within F.A.S.T.E.R.** Utilization of electronic transfer of financial aid transcript information should reduce some of the administrative burden currently experienced by institutions in the processing of aid data and accelerate the award process. Additionally, to facilitate the transfer of information to the State Office of Student Financial Assistance, F.A.S.T.E.R. should incorporate student data in the form required by OSFA, including cumulative grade point average and credits earned in the previous academic year.

18. **The State Board of Community Colleges should provide the assistance necessary to facilitate the automation of financial aid offices to see that the systems and procedures implemented by the community colleges are compatible with the State Office of Student Financial Assistance.** Institutions should be encouraged to share existing software that has proven effective and to jointly develop new capabilities where necessary. A time frame should be developed to assist those institutions that currently have poor or inadequate automation to strengthen their computer capabilities with respect to student financial aid.

19. **The State Office of Student Financial Assistance should continue to work closely with the State's financial aid directors on automation of State programs and procedures.** Institutional directors should be informed in advance of implementation concerning programmatic modifications in financial aid automation issues.

20. **The Department of Education should continue to support the provision of financial aid information to middle school and secondary education students.** In addition, the Department should support initiatives in the workplace and the general community targeting non-traditional students not currently in school with financial aid information.

21. **Universities and community colleges that do not presently offer a telephone hotline for financial aid information should develop a telephone service which will provide students with information on their applications or assist students in identifying aid programs and completing application requirements.**

22. **The State Office of Student Financial Assistance, the Board of Regents, and the State Board of Community Colleges should jointly examine the feasibility of providing computer access for students to information related to their financial aid status.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Legislative Charge

The Legislature, through proviso to Specific Appropriation 587 of the 1989 General Appropriations Act, directed the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission to conduct an analysis of the administration of student financial aid programs in state universities and community colleges. Proviso language further stated that the analysis should examine "organizational structure; number, classification and compensation of staff, to include student employees; workload requirements; the process of applying for and receiving financial aid; work measures; and other issues related to the administration of this function." A report and recommendations were to be submitted to the State Board of Education and Legislature by February 1, 1990.

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Historical Perspectives

Past Commission studies have examined student financial aid from several perspectives. A segment of the **Master Plan** (1982) addressed student tuition and financial aid policies, calling for the adoption of a new statutory state policy on student financial aid. Other recommendations supported continued administration of state student financial aid programs by a central state agency and reinforced access as the primary goal of financial assistance programs. The first supplement to the **Master Plan** was devoted to student financial aid policy and stressed the need for sound policies consistent with the State's educational quality improvement goals. The majority of the recommendations contained in this supplement were subsequently adopted in statute and rule. A closer examination of tuition and fees was made in a later report, **A Study of Alternative Tuition and Fee Policies** (1984). At the graduate level, the Commission addressed stipends and fee waivers as an element of a financial aid package for students in **Graduate Student Fee Waivers and Stipends** (1989).

The **Master Plan Update** (1988) reaffirmed the Commission's belief that the primary purpose of State financial aid should be to assure access for all students who can benefit from a postsecondary education. The **Update** underscored the need for improving student financial aid information. Compatible information systems to access data from the state universities,

community colleges, and vocational/technical centers was a Commission concern as was progress in developing a comprehensive data base for strategic financial aid planning within the Office of Student Financial Assistance.

The administrative aspect of postsecondary education was studied from a broad perspective in two Commission studies completed in 1989, **The Development of Administrative Standards for the State University System** and **A Review of Community College Administration**. The community college administration study found that each of Florida's public two-year colleges has a unique personnel classification plan and is administratively organized in a variety of ways. The Commission recommended (1) that the State Board of Community Colleges identify peer state community college systems in order to compare expenditures and staffing patterns for academic and support functions, and (2) that the Board develop an administrative review to permit colleges to analyze their management and fiscal performance in comparison with peer institutions both within the system and nationwide. In response to these recommendations and further direction by the Florida Legislature, the State Board of Community Colleges is currently undertaking these tasks.

As with the community colleges, the Commission found in its study of state university administration that the task of arriving at a consistent definition of administrators is a formidable one. After reviewing several national and state data bases including the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and Office of Civil Rights EEO-6 reports, the Commission concluded that the development of any administrative staffing standards or models would require a greater level of analysis. One approach suggested was the identification of peer institutions in other states with which systematic comparisons could be made. An alternative proposal was the selection of a single functional area for attention such as student financial aid or fiscal affairs rather than the entire administrative structure of the state university system. The 1989 Legislature chose this latter course of action.

II. STATE-LEVEL COORDINATION OF FINANCIAL AID IN FLORIDA

Several entities at the State level are associated with student financial aid programs in public institutions through policy and/or coordinating responsibilities. These include the Office of Student Financial Aid, the Board of Regents, and the State Board of Community Colleges. In addition, the Florida Council of Student Aid Advisors serves as a state-wide advisory group to the Commissioner of Education. Finally, information on financial aid sources is disseminated throughout the State using the Florida Career Information Delivery System (F-CIDS), formerly CHOICES, by the Bureau for Career Development Services.

State Office of Student Financial Aid

The Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) is the primary State coordinating agency for the administration of financial aid programs through the Department of Education. The office administers all State of Florida student aid programs as well as selected federal programs and provides general information for institutions and students. Organizationally, the Office of Student Financial Assistance consists of a director and staff. Two program specialists supervise federal programs and state programs. A third program specialist supervises a unit for contract monitoring and wage garnishment. An accounting unit comprises the fourth major component of the office. In total, OSFA has 64 FTE positions. The Office added eight new positions in 1989 with some specified for technical assistance and program administration.

During 1987-88, OSFA disbursed approximately $38,835,671 to 36,329 Florida students through state aid programs (Table 1). In academic year 1989-90, OSFA expected to administer 20 state financial aid programs. In addition, OSFA will administer two federal programs, the Paul Douglas Teacher Scholarship Loan Program and the Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program. In 1987-88, 210 Florida students received a total of $383,429 through these two federal programs.

As part of its responsibilities, OSFA also conducts approximately ten financial aid workshops annually for high school guidance counselors and college financial aid staff. The office promotes the use of aid programs through dissemination of financial aid brochures to schools for distribution to students and parents, direct mailings to high school students, distribution of posters for schools, libraries, and other public facilities, and direct mailings to college financial aid directors, college deans, county school superintendents, principals, and guidance counselors. Information routinely disseminated to students and others includes eligibility criteria and application processes for state and federal programs.

TABLE 1

DISBURSEMENTS FOR STATE STUDENT
ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
1987-88

PROGRAM	NUMBER OF STUDENTS[1]	AMOUNT DISBURSED
Student Assistance Grants	15,648	$14,349,256
Children of Disabled Veterans	43	36,381
Challenger Astronauts Memorial Scholarship Program	7	7,000
"Chappie" James Most Promising Teacher Scholarship Loan Program	446	1,595,569
Confederate Memorial Scholarships	22	3,075
Critical Teacher Shortage Tuition Reimbursement Program	1,020	328,503
Tuition Vouchers	14,083	14,921,130
Undergraduate Scholars Fund	3,578	3,834,750
Master's Fellowship Loan Program for Teachers	17	150,934
Student Loan Forgiveness Program	157	377,384
Student Regent Scholarship	1	5,000
Teacher Scholarship Loan	449	1,645,598
Virgil Hawkins Fellowships	23	115,000
College Career Work Experience	629	760,363
Graduate Scholars' Fund	51	450,000
Public School Work Experience Program	143	199,068
Seminole/Miccosukee Indian Scholarships	12	56,660
TOTALS	**36,329**	**$38,835,671**

[1]Duplicated headcount.

Source: Office of Student Financial Assistance, 1989.

Board of Regents

The Board of Regents (BOR) represents the State's nine public universities in responding to state-level student financial aid concerns and provides oversight in the administration of several aid programs and resources. The programs administered through the Board include funds raised during Charity Racing Days, Major Gifts Programs, and two grant-in-aid equity programs. The latter programs are administered by the Board's Office for Equal Opportunity, with one program for students and one for employees. The BOR also administers annual legislative financial aid appropriations. The 1987 Legislature provided $3 million to establish a financial aid program in the State University System. This amount was increased to $4.5 million by the 1988

Legislature and $9 million in 1989. The Board also provides the institutions with system support through data collection and dissemination. The BOR has enhanced its management information system since 1983 with the development and implementation of a student financial aid data base. Finally, the BOR has specific reporting responsibilities on Board-administered student financial aid programs that are required by the Commissioner of Education and the State Board of Education.

State Board of Community Colleges

As the coordinating agency for Florida's 28 public community colleges, the State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) responds to special reporting requests from the State on student financial aid programs. The SBCC also reports student aid data to the State which includes sources of funds, categories of aid, students served, and total dollar amounts of awards. In addition, the SBCC collects and disseminates information submitted by the institutions on their financial aid programs. The SBCC has implemented a unit record system, and financial aid data comparable to that reported by the State University System will be available by early 1990.

Florida Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors

Although there has been a state advisory council on student aid since 1963, it was reconfigured as the Florida Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors (Section 240.421, F.S.) in 1983. The Council serves as an advisory body to the Commissioner of Education on policy matters related to student financial aid and is composed of 14 members appointed by the Commissioner. Representatives include the Florida commercial financial community, the postsecondary education community, practicing financial aid administrators for accredited private institutions, as well as for public community colleges, state universities, and vocational education centers, a lay citizen, and a full-time student. The Council is responsible for preparing and submitting to the Commissioner, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives long-range plans for financial aid in Florida. In addition, the Council reviews biennial financial aid reports of the Department of Education (see Appendix C).

Bureau for Career Development Services

The Bureau for Career Development Services within the Department of Education provides financial aid information through Florida VIEW and the Florida Career Information Delivery System (F-CIDS), previously called CHOICES. VIEW is a set of microfilmed fiche cards arranged in four topic areas: Florida Career File, Military Occupational File, Florida Training File, and Financial Aid File. The development of a computerized financial aid component for F-CIDS or CHOICES was initiated in 1984. As part of a state-wide system, information in the F-CIDS financial aid component is disbursed through Florida high schools, area vocational-technical centers, community colleges, state universities, private colleges and universities, as well as prisons, community-based organizations, and vocational-rehabilitation centers. The system currently contains information on over 2300 individual sources of aid.

III. FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE ADMINISTRATION OF FINANCIAL AID

The administration of financial aid programs has grown increasingly complex over the years. A number of factors common to the administrative aspect of financial aid programs across the nation have contributed to this situation. The following paragraphs briefly examine several of these factors.

Sources and Types of Financial Aid

The growing number of aid sources, diverse types of financial aid, and related verification and validation requirements affect the administration of these programs. Student financial aid is available through federal, state, institutional, and private sources. Historically, early aid programs from federal and state sources were designed to assist returning military servicemen, to stimulate economic development through reducing manpower shortages, and to recognize scholastic and athletic talent. In recent years, however, the emphasis has moved to enhancing educational opportunities for financially needy students and to preserving the public-private system of higher education in the United States.

There are four classifications of financial aid: scholarships, which are based on skill, achievement, or financial need; loans; grants; and student employment. Significantly, one-fourth of the state financial aid programs available nationally in 1988-89 were not in existence five years ago (NASSGP, 1989). In addition to the various federal and state programs open to students, financial aid offices must also process applications for institutional aid and, in many cases, scholarships and loans offered by business and industry, community groups, and from individual private citizens. Each aid program carries submission deadlines, eligibility criteria, and other rules and regulations that add to the administrative workload in making a financial aid award. In arranging financial aid packages the uncertainties created by rule and regulation changes and by priority ranking of applicants often result in numerous revisions of award packages by financial aid staff.

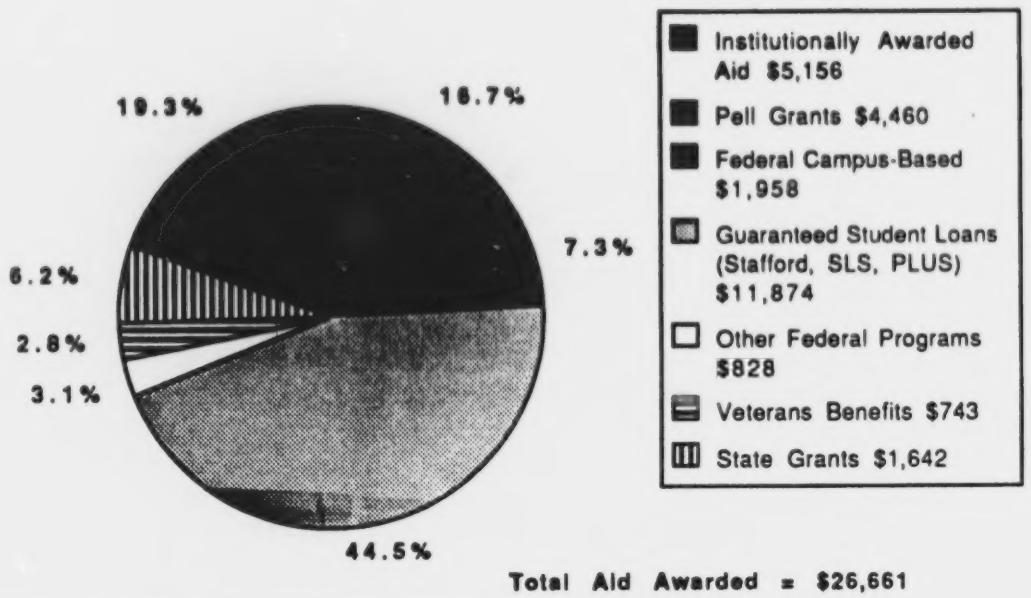
The total amount of financial aid awarded to students in postsecondary education institutions has increased dramatically in the past 30 years. The College Board (Lewis, 1989) noted that estimated aid to students in postsecondary education surpassed $26.6 billion in academic year 1988-89, 55 percent more than the amount of aid available in 1980-81. Figure 1 illustrates the breakdown of sources. Guaranteed Student Loans (GSL), Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (PLUS), and Supplemental Loans for Students (SLS) accounted for about 44.5 percent of all estimated aid, and Pell Grants added another 16.7 percent of federal aid. In 1987-88, total federal aid represented approximately 75 percent of all estimated aid, compared to 6 percent from state grants and 19 percent from institutionally awarded aid. During the decade of the eighties, the federal share of available aid decreased from 83 to 75 percent. Institutional aid increased from 12 to 19 percent, and state aid grew from 5 to 6 percent.

Funding for most state student aid programs increased in 1988-89. The National Association of State Scholarship and Grant Programs (NASSGP) reported that states were expected to award about $1.9 billion in grant aid to more than 1.3 million students through state-funded need-based and non-need-based

aid programs in 1988-89. The number of students receiving these awards increased by one percent over 1987-88. NASSGP noted that while aggregate award dollars were expected to grow by 45 percent between 1983-84 and 1988-89, the expected growth in recipients is almost negligible.

FIGURE 1

ESTIMATED STUDENT AID BY SOURCE FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 1988-89
(Current Dollars in Millions)



Total Aid Awarded = $26,661

Source: The College Entrance Examination Board, 1989.

Approximately 80 percent of state grant dollars are awarded to undergraduates through need-based, comprehensive grant and scholarship programs. NASSGP data show that 29 states award aid to undergraduates without consideration of their financial needs. Non-need-based undergraduate grant aid generally falls into three categories: (1) "tuition equalization programs" to help reduce the differences between tuition and costs at private and public institutions; (2) "scholarship programs" to award meritorious students; and (3) "categorical aid programs" to encourage participation in particular programs of study, such as teachers, or programs which aid dependents of special constituents, such as veterans. The latter generally serves very small numbers of students. NASSGP reports that since 1983-84, aggregate non-need-based aid to undergraduates has grown by 63 percent--compared to a 45 percent rate evident in need-based aid to undergraduates.

Validation of data on student financial aid applications has been an increasingly important responsibility of institutional financial aid offices. Prior to academic year 1978-79, the Federal Office of Education verified

information on applications for Basic Education Opportunity Grants. Since 1978-79, however, students have been required to provide documentation on data directly to the postsecondary education institution. The institutional role in applicant verification expanded in 1985-86 to include Pell Grants and again in 1986 to also encompass campus-based aid and Guaranteed Student Loans (GSL).

Hills et al. (1987) found that the verification process required for award year 1986-87 resulted in increased workloads and costs and in revised staff work and responsibilities in nearly all financial aid offices surveyed in the western region. Verification produced additional operating costs through mailing expenses and staff overtime. Also, 42 percent of the institutions experienced increased student contact. In other instances, the financial aid offices reduced student services because of the workload demands associated with verification. Services affected included counseling, debt management, office hours, and follow-up on incomplete files. Students were directly affected by the verification requirements through decreased services available. Also, institutions acknowledged that some students did not enroll because they could not complete the process in time to receive the funds needed.

Student Characteristics

In addition to the variety in types and sources of aid, the administration of financial aid programs is influenced by the characteristics of the students to be served within the institution and the state. For example, the number of need-based financial aid applications is higher in states and institutions with larger numbers of students from middle- and low-income groups. Mortenson (1989), in a study for the American College Testing Program, found that "poor families now constitute a larger share of all American families than they did when the current student financial aid system was designed in the early 1970s. The growth in the proportion of families that are poor, coupled with the increasing proportion of American children being raised in families living below the poverty level, has profound implications...Student financial aid administration [is] especially affected by the growth in the proportion of poor families." The impact of low income college students is particularly evident in the community colleges. Mortenson noted that between 1980 and 1986 the proportion of college freshmen nationally from poverty level family incomes enrolled in public two-year colleges increased from 32.0 percent to 39.7 percent. Concurrently, the proportion of this group enrolled in public universities declined from 12.1 percent to 7.3 percent during the same period.

A concern relative to the socioeconomic status of in-coming students is their academic preparation, particularly their ability to do college-level work. As larger numbers of students enter college needing to complete remedial or developmental coursework, their financial aid requirements may mean additional work for the financial aid office. Enrollment in remedial courses usually qualifies students for financial aid consideration, yet it also prolongs their stay in the institution.

Another student-related characteristic is the proportion of students enrolled full-time versus part-time. Part-time students have traditionally had access to fewer financial aid programs as criteria often limit eligibility to students studying on a full-time basis. Approximately 30 states offer some

kind of financial aid for part-timers, although most of the programs are restricted. Among federal programs, Pell Grants are available to students carrying at least a half load of courses, and this will expand in 1990 to include needy students enrolled for less than a half load. A major concern is whether funding will be sufficient to serve the part-time students after first satisfying needy full-time students. In other cases, total financial support for full-time students has eroded as funding is allocated to part-time students.

With the great increase in recent years in the proportion of students who take less than a full-time course load, a few states are evaluating the adequacy of their financial aid programs to serve the part-time segment of the student population. NASSGP found that much of the aid from the new need-based programs in 1988-89 would be from programs designed to aid part-time and non-traditional students. In terms of the administration of these programs, the impact is felt at the institutional level. Officials may be reluctant to promote the programs because they require more work than preparing an aid package for a full-time student since smaller sums are distributed to a greater number of students.

Institutional Characteristics

A third influence on the administration of financial aid programs involves the characteristics of the institution. Larger institutions with more diverse academic programs usually administer more financial aid programs. Other characteristics that are important to the total administration of aid include the presence of graduate as well as undergraduate study, whether the institution is two-year, public or private, residential or commuter, and urban or rural. Each of these will involve different types of students and possibly different types of financial aid programs. For example, research institutions offer financial aid that may be administered separately through the graduate student office, through the academic departments, or through the main student financial aid office.

Financial Aid Staff

Finally, the financial aid staff is an important component in the administration of aid programs. While the number of professional and support staff working with the programs is central to efficient and effective program administration, other issues related to personnel include preparation and experience, longevity in the position, job satisfaction, and turnover.

Recent research has shown that high stress levels and dissatisfaction exist among financial aid employees (Everly and Girdano, 1980). These factors result in low morale, frustration, and impaired performance which often lead to burnout and job turnover. Factors associated with stress include low income; changing regulations; increased workloads; perceptions of difficult work environments; discussions with angry applicants; decreasing morale; administrations emphasizing recruitment and retention; faculty and coaches with special needs; parents whose children cannot get a "bureaucratic" break; and low income communities who look to the financial aid office for assistance with their educational aspirations (Krag and Levy, 1989; Murray, 1987).

A survey of postsecondary financial aid administrators found differentiated levels and sources of stress among staff positions (Krag and Levy, 1988). Counselors were more likely to suffer stress from being distracted by interruptions and technicians. Clerical staff suffered from being behind schedule. Top-level administrators viewed changing regulations and adaptation to automation as stressful. Some personnel experienced stress produced by conflicts between institutional and personal values. Often, institutional procedures did not favor immediate student needs. Also, schools required staff to work in areas where they were untrained or uncomfortable. Stressors can also be gender-specific. Women tend to suffer from feelings of isolation, immobility, salary inequity, conflicts with personal values and high self-expectations (Reisser and Zurfluh, 1987). Men are more concerned with role confusion, decreasing morale, leadership and productivity (Ginsburg, 1987).

Among the factors which influence the administration of financial aid at an institutional level, issues relating to personnel are an important component. Staffing patterns, educational preparation, and training practices within institutional offices of student financial aid vary, depending in large part on the size of the student body served. To provide general background on these issues, information from national surveys and reports is summarized below. Data gathered from directors of financial aid offices in Florida's public universities and community colleges as well as from state boards are presented in the next chapter.

Professional staff in financial aid offices possess different educational and training levels. Additionally, titles of staff may vary among institutions. In order to aggregate data on financial aid office personnel, the National Association of Student Financial Aid Advisors (NASFAA) periodically surveys directors of aid programs throughout the nation in public, private, and proprietary institutions. The 1988-89 national study found that academic preparations of directors in public institutions vary considerably. Among those surveyed, 8.3 percent held doctorates, and 60.8 percent possessed master's degrees. Almost, one fourth had earned bachelor's degrees, and 4.2 percent held associate degrees or postsecondary certificates. Approximately 73 percent of public four-year directors and 50 percent of public two-year directors had at least ten years of financial aid experience, suggesting the emergence of a career ladder in financial aid administration.

Directors of financial aid offices have traditionally been men, but the survey noted that an increasing percentage are women, from 33.2 percent in 1977 to 50.5 percent in 1985. Female directors, however, tend to be located at private two- and four-year colleges and vocational schools. Nationally, 16 percent of the directors in public four-year and 20 percent in public two-year institutions were from racial/ethnic minority groups, with 40.4 percent black. Minority directors are more common at public than private schools and are more likely to become directors at two-year colleges rather than other types of institutions.

Other financial aid staff include associate and assistant directors, administrative specialists, clerical staff, and student assistants. Staff sizes from the NASFAA study varied by institutional type and enrollment. Public universities with over 20,000 undergraduates had a median clerical

staff size of 15.4, and those with 7,000 to 19,999 undergraduates had a median of 11.1. Public junior/community colleges had a median clerical staff size of 1.84. Prominent staffing patterns revealed one professional and clerical staff member per 500-999 students and seven to 20 professionals and 10 to 20 clerks per 10,000 or more recipients. Workloads, defined as the number of students served, varied considerably and reflected institutional differences in staff composition and job responsibilities as well as the use of automated equipment. NASFAA cautioned against identifying a factor such as the number of aid recipients served in order to relate that to a suggested "norm" for staff sizes.

Although millions of students receive financial aid annually amounting to billions of dollars, NASFAA noted that the administration of aid is not necessarily a large volume activity. The number of aid recipients to be served has increased in recent years and changes in federal regulations have generated more activities in handling applications. Nonetheless, aid offices are generally not being staffed by more professionals. Only small incremental increases were evident between 1983 and 1988 in median professional staff sizes, and these occurred primarily in offices on larger campuses. NASFAA did not examine the impact of automated data processing systems on the administration of financial aid nor on the size of professional staffs.

The complexity of financial aid requires that both administrators and staff be well-versed in changing financial aid procedures. Professional development and training are important to maintain staff competency and enhance job satisfaction. However, the financial aid profession is still in its infancy and administrative role expectations have not been as clearly defined as in other professions. As a result, administrators and support staff may experience role confusion. Research indicates that directors generally require only brief updates on such traditional job responsibilities as federal program administration, budget preparation and award revisions. Yet, extensive training is needed in ambiguous areas like student recruitment, new state aid policies, and personnel evaluations (McDougal, 1983). Other professional and support staff have felt competent in such areas as aid evaluations, communications skills, and internal regulations but requested more training in federal program regulations, recognizing fraud, counseling skills, and information management (Hills, 1988).

Most training for financial aid officers is either on the job, through loan agencies or by national, state, and regional workshops. On-the-job training provides for practical application but often results in a series of mistakes. Loan agencies provide specific training for their requirements but sessions are few and far between. Hills (1988) surveyed financial aid employees in several western states. He reported that national, state and regional workshops were effective but too general and favored practitioners' rather than students' needs. Self-learning materials distributed by NASFAA to its members were perceived as narrow in scope and unadaptable for group-training exercises. Internships, while effective, were impractical due to time and cost. Attendance at workshops was regarded as the most effective form of training from an employee perspective.

IV. FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATION IN FLORIDA PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES

The following sections summarize general information relative to financial aid offices in Florida's public postsecondary institutions. Much of the information comes from an analysis of survey questionnaires collected from directors of financial aid offices and another from a sample of students in public universities and colleges in the State. These data are supplemented by findings from on-site interviews of a sample of financial aid directors and other institutional representatives as well as analysis of documents. The sections are arranged by topical area with separate discussions of university and community college institutions where appropriate.

Organizational Structure and Personnel

Within the State University System, financial aid offices tend to be located within the student services area. Six of the nine directors of financial aid report to the institutional vice president for student affairs, while the remaining three respond to a dean of undergraduate studies, the university registrar, or an associate vice president for enrollment. Internally, financial aid offices are generally composed of professional staff assisted by support personnel. The SUS classifies some aid office professional staff as Administrative and Professional (A&P) while others are classified in the University Support Personnel System (USPS). Class specification information, including position descriptions and minimum qualifications, are provided by the central office of the SUS. These positions are described briefly below together with data comparing staffing levels in 1981-82 and 1988-89 for student aid office personnel (Tables 2 and 3).

Directors of financial aid offices are responsible for the overall leadership and supervision of aid staff and for ensuring that established goals and objectives for the department, university, and Board of Regents are met. Directors must also oversee compliance with federal, state and university policies relating to financial aid programs. Directors are classified as A&P personnel. Qualifications for this position include a master's degree and four years of related professional experience or a bachelor's degree and six years of directly related experience.

Among the university aid directors, five have been in their current positions more than three years while two have been in their positions less than one year. Previously, most directors had either worked as a director at another institution or as a coordinator or associate director of financial aid. The highest level of academic preparation varied; six directors had at least a master's degree. Five directors held their highest degree in education while others had received their degrees in business, psychology, or history. In terms of distribution of their time, few spend more than half their time on any task area identified (program administration, staff management, counseling, institutional responsibilities, and other). All directors spend less than 25 percent of their time in counseling or institutional responsibilities. Most respondents dedicate from one-fourth to three-quarters of their time to program administration. A similar proportion devote one-quarter to three-quarters of their time to staff management. In Fall 1989, university directors' annual salary range was $33,500 to $60,300.

TABLE 2

STAFFING TRENDS AND FUNCTIONAL ALLOCATION OF POSITIONS RELATED TO STUDENT FINANCIAL AID 1981-81 AND 1988-89

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

INCREASING POSITIONS	1981-82	1988-89	DIFFERENCE (NUMBER)
Associate Director	1.00	8.00	+ 7.00
Assistant Director	7.00	12.00	+ 5.00
Student Affairs Coordinator	4.00	15.00	+11.00
Financial Aid Specialist	0.00	41.26	+41.26
Financial Aid Evaluator	0.00	28.24	+28.24
MIS	11.00	14.00	+ 3.00
Finance and Accounting	10.25	16.50	+ 6.25
Key Punch Operators	8.50	18.50	+10.00
Student Affairs Coordinators (Registrar's Office)	0.00	.80	+ .80
MIS (Registrar's Office)	0.00	.40	+ .40
Directors of Admissions (Registrar's Office)	0.00	1.20	+ 1.20
Financial Aid Counselors (Comptroller's Office)	6.00	9.00	+ 3.00
Collections Manager	2.50	3.50	+ 1.00
Information Resource Systems Analyst	.50	12.50	+12.00
DECREASING POSITIONS	**1981-82**	**1988-89**	**DIFFERENCE**
Financial Aid Counselors	35.00	0.00	-35.00
Counseling (support staff)	4.00	0.00	- 4.00
Clerical	57.00	56.00	- 1.00
Secretarial	16.00	14.00	- 2.00
UNCHANGED POSITIONS	**1981-82**	**1988-89**	**DIFFERENCE**
Director	9.00	9.00	0
Systems Coordinator	2.00	2.00	0
Public Information Specialist	1.00	1.00	0

Source: Commission staff analysis from Board of Regents data, 1989.

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF FTE POSITIONS RELATED TO
FINANCIAL AID OFFICES BY INSTITUTION
1981-82 AND 1988-89

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

INSTITUTION	NUMBER OF POSITIONS 1981-82	1988-89	DIFFERENCE (NUMBER)
University of Florida	68.50	91.40	+22.90
Florida State University	44.25	72.50	+28.25
University of South Florida	29.00	46.50	+17.50
University of Central Florida	14.00	28.00	+14.00
Florida A&M University	14.00	20.00	+ 6.00
Florida Atlantic University	14.00	20.00	+ 6.00
Florida International University	17.50	23.80	+ 6.30
University of West Florida	11.00	14.00	+ 3.00
University of North Florida	8.00	10.50	+ 2.50
TOTAL	**216.25**	**326.70**	**+110.45**

Source: Commission staff analysis from Board of Regents data, 1989.

Associate Directors are generally responsible for the direction and management of specific functional areas and for assisting with the overall administration and coordination of financial aid offices. Other duties include staff supervision, planning and directing program activity, compiling information and reports needed for fiscal solvency, and developing and implementing procedures designed to produce efficient and effective management of financial aid programs. SUS qualifications for an Associate Director position include a master's degree and three years of specialized professional experience or a bachelor's degree and five years of directly related experience. In 1981-82, Florida Atlantic University was the only SUS institution to employ an Associate Director of financial aid. By Fall 1989, eight public universities had at least one Associate Director each. Annual salaries for these A&P employees range from $23,500 to $51,400.

Assistant Directors of financial aid are generally responsible for the coordination and administration of specific financial aid programs. Other duties include staff supervision, preparing statistical information for granting agencies, developing and implementing programs for minority and disadvantaged students and reviewing appeals of financial aid awards. In 1981-82, there were seven Assistant Directors located in five universities. In 1988-89, all universities had a least one assistant director with the exception of the University of West Florida, Florida International University, and Florida Atlantic University. Annual salaries for assistant directors in

1989-90 were from $19,887 to $29,440. Comparable assistant director positions have existed in both A&P and USPS classifications. After February 1990, only the A&P classification will be used.

Financial Aid Specialists are USPS staff who report to either Assistant or Associate Directors and are primarily responsible for evaluating data to determine student eligibility for financial aid. Other duties include interpreting exceptions to aid policies, locating private loan resources, making presentations to parents, students and other departments and finding jobs for work-study students. Minimum qualifications include a bachelor's degree and one year of financial aid experience or professional experience in evaluating financial data. In 1981-82, there were no specialists employed in the State University System, while in 1988-89 there were 41.25. The University of North Florida was the only institution that did not employ specialists between 1981 and 1989.

Financial Aid Evaluators are also classified USPS and report to Assistant or Associate Directors. They are primarily responsible for evaluating individual financial need. Other duties involve determining the combination of amounts and types of aid offered, as well as counseling students about aid options, student budgets, and money management. Minimum qualifications include a bachelor's degree and specialized experience in financial aid programs. Table 2 shows no financial aid evaluators in 1981; there were 28 in 1988-89. All institutions except UNF and FAU employed evaluators between 1981 and 1989. The salary range in Fall 1989 was from $15,000 to 24,300.

Financial Aid Counselors hold USPS classifications. Although there were 35 aid counselors systemwide in 1981-82, in 1988-89 there were none. This decrease may account for large increases in the financial aid specialist and evaluator positions, which have higher salary levels. Counselors assessed the financial status of students for determining eligibility and disbursing financial assistance, and/or recovering benefits owed to the university.

Among the support staff positions, there was a slight increase in Management Information Systems (MIS) positions between 1981-82 and 1988-89, from 11 MIS positions to 14. The University of Florida has consistently employed the majority of these individuals, with nine in 1988-89. Between 1981-1989, both FSU and FAU decreased the number of MIS positions from one to zero and neither UWF nor FIU employed MIS personnel during that time. The number of data entry operators more than doubled between 1981 and 1989, from eight to 18. FAMU, UNF, UCF, and FIU did not employ keypunch operators in 1981-82 or in 1988-89. UF and FSU were the only institutions to employ Systems Coordinator Analysts between 1981 and 1989. Counseling positions in financial aid were phased out during the eight-year period. Finally, UF remains the only institution to employ personnel in a Public Information position. Table 2 indicates stability in system-wide clerical and secretarial positions in financial aid offices between 1981 and 1989.

The State University System is completing a classification restructuring project for the USPS and the A&P personnel classification plans. Effective February 1990, a new class, Coordinator, Student Financial Aid, will be established within the A&P classification plan. The Coordinator class will provide an entry-level professional position for university financial aid

offices. A second change affecting financial aid personnel will be the elimination of dual classifications for Assistant Director positions. Under restructuring, the A&P class of Assistant Director, Student Financial Aid, will be maintained while the USPS class of Assistant Student Financial Aid Director will be discontinued. Also, The titles of Financial Aid Specialist and Financial Aid Evaluator will be changed to Senior Financial Aid Officer and Financial Aid Officer, respectively, to reflect the career progression of these positions.

The Community College System does not maintain a personnel classification system comparable to that of the State University System, and reporting employee information to the State Board of Community Colleges is optional. The SBCC personnel database identifies an individual's occupational activity within a range of ten values (e.g., executive/administrative/managerial, instructional staff, specialist/support staff, technical/paraprofessional). Since few institutions report these data to the state office and few community college directors provided classification information on the survey, an analysis of staff classifications across the Community College System (CCS) and between the SUS and the CCS could not be conducted. In their review of staffing levels in community colleges, the consultants concluded that "staff deficiencies could be a major contributor to administrative problems" in several of the colleges. Subsequently, a recommendation was made by the consultants that administrators of the community colleges whose financial aid staffing complement is below national average levels give special attention to staffing needs in order to reduce or avoid situations where either service to students or financial stewardship might be at risk due to staffing problems. A position paper submitted by Florida Community College Financial Aid Administrators also requested that the State address staffing of community college financial aid offices, although no specific strategies were recommended. These administrators reference such factors as the growth pattern in aid programs, dollars, and applicants/recipients within the past five years and the ratio of staff-to-applicants/recipients during the same time period.

In addition to staff described above, personnel from other institutional administrative areas may also provide direct support to the financial aid office. For example, in the Registrar's office, financial aid responsibilities have been assigned to student affairs coordinators and MIS personnel. Admissions offices have also assisted with financial aid functions. In addition, personnel from the Comptroller's Office and Information Resource Management may be involved.

Finally, students provide considerable support in some financial aid offices in the administration of aid programs. Based on the surveys and interviews, work/study students rarely perform counseling functions. The number of FTE positions filled by students varies across institutions. Among the eight responding universities, seven reported fewer than ten FTE positions filled by students while one university averaged 16 and another averaged 32 FTE positions during the past two years. Most community colleges indicated that fewer than three FTE positions were filled by students. During institutional site visits and in discussions with students on campuses, it was determined that work/study students often occupy positions where they are the first point of contact for students who go into the financial aid office for information

on their applications as well as for general orientation. Work/study students also assist with students' files. During interviews and through comments on the student survey, particularly on the university campuses, students complained of the extensive use of work/study students in the aid office.

Individual institutional staffing numbers by full-time-equivalent (FTE) and headcount were reported by directors. Between September 1987 and April 1989, three universities increased the number of FTE employees while three institutions decreased, and two remained basically unchanged. One institution did not respond to this item. However, headcount of employees remained relatively stable for five institutions with three universities decreasing in headcount number and one increasing. Reliance on part-time personnel is apparent when comparing an institution's headcount and FTE staff figures. In September 1988 and April 1989 the ratio of FTE-to-headcount employees was approximately 1:1 at two of eight responding universities. This ratio allows for few part-time employees. Four universities had a ratio of 1:1.5 and two had a 1:2 ratio. The latter ratio suggests a large number of part-time employees.

Among most community colleges, in contrast to universities, both staff FTE and headcount varied little between September 1987 and April 1989. The FTE-to-headcount ratio during those periods was 1:1.5 for six colleges and 1:1 for seventeen colleges. Five institutions did not submit complete data. Among the 23 community colleges with comparable data, there had been less reliance on part-time employees in financial aid offices than in the nine state universities.

During six of the years between 1982-83 and 1988-89, the State University System received special appropriations to enhance staffing of student financial aid offices (Table 4). In addition, 50 positions and $2,000,000 were appropriated in 1989-90. Distribution of recent new positions was based on the new funding methodology unless otherwise designated in proviso. Criteria considered were the institution's full-time-equivalent enrollment and headcount enrollment. The degree to which these monies were targeted solely for the financial aid office varied through the years. In 1982-83 and 1989-90, proviso stipulated that 30 and 50 new positions respectively were to be created for student financial aid offices. In the remaining years, however, funding was distributed within Student Services generally. In 1989 the nine state universities reported on the use of new positions appropriated for institutional support between 1982-83 and 1988-89. Within the student services component, a total of 65.54 new positions were listed for financial aid administration. Also, one institution indicated that 20 percent of 11 other full-time-equivalent positions in student services and seven positions in another administrative area were dedicated to the administration of financial aid programs. As Table 5 illustrates, of the 725.5 positions appropriated for all institutional support areas between 1982-83 and 1988-89, 271.5 were discounted as administrative reductions in 1983-84. In assessing staffing patterns at university campuses, the study consultants concluded that the nine institutions exhibited reasonable staffing levels when compared to national data.

Staff productivity and need for additional permanent positions were areas of concern for this study. Two university and nine community college directors

reported they did not measure staff productivity. Among the remaining institutions, about half measure staff productivity and determine need for additional permanent positions through the number of students served, the number of applications processed, and unfinished or delayed tasks. Less common methods included overtime hours accumulated, reassignment of tasks, number of student complaints and level of student satisfaction.

Financial Aid Office Staff Training

As noted, administering financial aid programs is a dynamic process due to constant changes in programs and in their criteria as well as in federal and state policies. Consequently, aid office employees must have continual access to updating in order to properly counsel applicants and evaluate their applications. Financial aid office directors were queried about staff training and updating. Regarding the kinds of job orientation and training new employees receive prior to joining the aid office or during their first week of employment, procedures manuals and in-house seminars or workshops were the most frequently mentioned form of orientation. On-the-job training was cited by approximately one third of the community colleges. Very few institutions used audio/video tapes or training sessions developed by associations and organizations such as the National Association of Student Financial Aid Advisors (NASFAA), the College Board, and the American College Testing Service. Techniques used to keep aid employees current on local, state, and federal financial aid programs, policies, and rules were primarily staff bulletins and memoranda, staff meetings, individual conferences, and routing of aid information. Attending local, state, and national conferences was infrequently noted as a method of keeping aid employees current.

In their discussion of employee training, the study consultants supported formalized training as an extremely important element of financial aid administration, especially in light of the complexity of aid programs and extensive fiscal, ethical, and institutional responsibility placed on financial aid staff members. The consultants' final report enumerated several areas which require regular updating or reinforcement through training or other means:

- needs analysis
- verification processes
- state and federal regulations
- new and revised programs
- counseling and communicating effectively with students and parents
- instruction in the use of information systems
- the nature of the student body of the institution
- the goals and objectives of the institution
- the importance of financial aid in promoting the goals and objectives of the institution

TABLE 4

HISTORY OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR ENHANCED STAFFING OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID OFFICES

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Year	Issue/Amount	Proviso
1982-83	$750,000 and 30 positions for Student Financial Aid Offices	Of the funds in Specific Appropriations 373 through 376 and 394, $750,000 shall be used for improvements in the staffing of the Financial Aid offices. These funds may be used for establishing up to 30 additional positions and for upgrading salaries of existing professional positions. The Board of Regents shall conduct the necessary studies to establish the needs at each university. These funds shall be distributed to the universities based on these studies. None of these funds may be used to supplant resources currently allocated to the Financial Aid offices.
1983-84	$12.0 M and up to 450 positions for Enhanced University Support to include Student Services	Funds in Specific Appropriation 456A shall be used to enhance University Support activities within each university. Priority for the use of these funds shall be placed upon enhancing academic advising, libraries, student services, administrative services including implementation of SAMAS, and physical plant support activities. In addition, each university with a laboratory school shall allocate additional funds as necessary to assure that these entities receive an increase per student which is equal to the increase in base student allocation as provided in the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) for 1983-84. Up to 450 positions may be established associated with this appropriation.
1984-85	-0-	
1985-86	-0-	
1986-87	$4.0 M and 150 positions for Enhanced Institutional Support to include Student Financial Aid Office Support	Funds provided in Specific Appropriation 521B through 521E shall include as a primary consideration the needs in the areas of security, libraries and student services (to include financial aid support). The Board of Regents shall submit a report to the Legislature regarding the implementation of this appropriation.
1987-88	$1.8 M and 61 positions for enhancement of Student Services primarily in Financial Aid Offices and Counseling Programs	Funds provided in Specific Appropriations 538, 539, 540, and 541 for enhancement of student services shall be used to address needs in the areas of student support services, primarily financial aid offices and counseling programs.
1988-89	$1.3 M and 34.5 positions for enhanced funding of Student Services	Funds in Specific Appropriations 528, 529, 530, and 531 for enhancement of student services shall be allocated based on the average of the 1988-89 planned enrollment and the fall 1987 headcount enrollment.

Source: Senate Appropriations Committee Staff, 1989.

TABLE 5

DISTRIBUTION OF POSITIONS FOR THOSE INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT ISSUES THAT INCLUDE ENHANCED STAFFING OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID OFFICES 1982-83 TO 1988-89

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA

POSITIONS	TOTAL	UF	FSU	FAMU	USF	FAU	UWF	UCF	FIU	UNF	UNALLOCATED
1982-83	30.00	9.00	6.00	1.50	4.50	2.00	1.50	3.00	1.50	1.00	
1983-84	450.00	113.00	81.00	33.00	78.00	28.00	23.00	38.00	38.00	18.00	
1983-84 Admin Reduction	-271.50	-64.00	-52.50	-17.00	-46.00	-18.00	-13.00	-24.00	-26.00	-11.00	
1986-87	150.00	22.82	24.72	9.51	29.00	11.17	10.94	20.92	13.31	7.61	
1987-88	61.00	15.25	9.76	2.44	11.59	4.27	2.44	6.71	6.10	2.44	
1988-89	34.50	8.00	5.52	1.36	6.45	2.39	1.47	3.82	3.58	1.42	0.49
TOTAL	**454.00**	**104.07**	**74.50**	**30.81**	**83.54**	**29.83**	**26.35**	**48.45**	**36.49**	**19.47**	**0.49**

Note: Of the 725.50 positions appropriated, 695.99 were established by the universities through the lump sum process. After considering the 1983-84 administrative reductions, this brings the net to 424.49 or 29.51 less than appropriated.

Source: Board of Regents, 1989.

The consultants concluded that a regular training program should be developed and maintained at all institutions. The State University System does not specifically earmark funds for in-service training purposes. In contrast, institutions in the Community College System are required to allocate an amount not less than two percent of the previous year's program fund for the purpose of funding staff and program development activities.

Financial Aid Office Staff Salary and Compensation Levels

As indicated in an earlier section of this study, the complexity of financial aid program administration requires highly qualified staff. A recurrent issue in discussions with financial aid directors during the course of this study was staffing, particularly the difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified counselors and aid evaluators. In addition to job-related stress produced by the nature of the tasks involved with financial aid program administration, compensation levels have not been competitive so prospective as well as current staff seek other more attractive positions.

In a salary comparison of Florida public institutions and national data from the NASFAA report, the consultants noted that community college salaries for counselors were 15 percent below the estimated national median for similar institutions. Similarly, university counselor salaries were 19 percent below. Some university aid directors noted that they could not compete with community college salaries in counseling, evaluator, and specialist positions. Although no regional data were available for comparison among institutions in the South, the State University System recently completed a salary survey of selected financial aid positions in the southeastern states. Florida salaries for financial aid evaluators were 33.6 percent below the average, financial aid specialist salaries were 4.7 percent below the average, and director salaries were 21.8 percent below the average. The consultants attributed part of the low compensation problem in Florida to the way that counselors and evaluators are categorized. The consultants maintained that relegating counselors to a sub-professional status appeared to be a significant barrier to professional growth in the field and a contributor to higher-than-average turnover at the counselor level. In a recommendation addressing this issue, the consultants called for an examination of the classification and compensation of financial aid specialists, evaluators, and counselors and consideration of alternatives to eliminate salary disparities, promote their professional status, and reduce employee turnover. Community college and university financial aid administrators support the need to examine classification and salaries, pointing out that salaries and staffing patterns in aid offices often seem inconsistent with the duties and responsibilities required of these personnel.

Turnover among professional staff can be costly. Aid directors estimated that it took from six months to one year to adequately train a counselor or evaluator. This situation is exacerbated if the individual has very minimal qualifications for the position. On the survey of financial aid directors, five of the nine university directors indicated that one fourth to one half of their full-time professional staff positions (excluding the positions of director, associate director, assistant director, and coordinator) were vacant at some time between June 1988 and July 1989. In the Community College System, employee turnover was lower, with only three of the 28 colleges

reporting that one fourth to one half of these full-time professional staff positions were vacant in 1988-89. Most of the two-year institutions experienced vacancy rates of zero to 25 percent--no vacancy to one fourth of the full-time positions vacant--across all positions.

Staffing needs are not constant year round in financial aid offices. Seasonal highs and lows exist in the administration of aid programs as they do in many other administrative units in colleges and universities. Directors of aid offices generally characterize the period from July through September as overload months. The workload declines to average or high in October and November but increases again in December and reaches another peak overload period in January. February through April is described as average, but in May the workload is high and continues increasing through the summer months. Some institutions reported low workload months in November, December, and February.

Automation of Financial Aid Services

Automation is common in financial aid offices--the degree of automation, however, is not. The degree to which financial aid offices are automated depends on such factors as a supportive institutional philosophy that encourages automation, absolute necessity, knowledge of staff--particularly for computerization, financial resources, and time. National research indicates that financial aid offices have been slower to computerize than other college support areas. Smaller institutions often rely on microcomputers unless they access a state-wide network such as the Florida Information Resource Network (FIRN). Larger institutions may have mainframe capacity which is supplemented by minicomputers and personal computers. All of the State's public colleges and universities, with the exception of one community college, are connected to FIRN. Through FIRN, these institutions electronically transmit Stafford loan (Guaranteed Student Loan) information. In addition, all of the State universities can use FIRN to access ACT and the College Board for financial aid needs analysis information.

On the study questionnaire, directors of aid programs were asked to indicate the extent to which sixteen tasks were computerized in their offices. Results showed that the level of automation varies considerably across institutions, with universities generally reporting more automated tasks than community colleges. Most university directors reported that tasks completely automated included notification of award, tracking of documents, financial aid transcripts, and FISAP (Fiscal Operations Report required by the federal government). Five additional tasks (disbursement, statistical analyses and reporting, Stafford certification, management of funds, and inadequate/missing information) were somewhat computerized by at least half of the universities. Only staff training/orientation was listed as not automated at all by most of the institutions, while approximately half indicated that verification and loan collection were not automated at all. In sum, most of the universities were at least somewhat automated in most of the tasks identified.

Community college directors reported far less automation. No task was completely automated by most of the colleges. Ten colleges had completely automated the notification of award, disbursement, and FISAP; twelve colleges had completely automated management of funds. At least half of the colleges had no automation for Stafford loan certification, analysis of need,

verification, staff training/orientation, inadequate/missing information, packaging of awards, loan collection, financial aid transcripts, or mass mailings.

Directors from universities indicated the tasks that should be added or expanded to increase the efficient and effective administration of aid programs were verification, student academic progress reviews, and packaging of awards. Overall, universities ranked their current level of automation as serving their needs either very well or moderately well. Only one university indicated that its level of automation did not serve its needs very well.

Community college directors identified tracking of documents, financial aid transcripts, and packaging of awards as tasks that should be added or expanded. In terms of directors' perceptions of how well their current level of automation served their needs, none reported very well; thirteen marked moderately well. For ten directors, their level of automation did not serve them very well, while five directors believed they were poorly served by their existing level of automation.

A common concern across the institutions focused on the heavy administrative load associated with student academic progress reports. While most of the responding institutions reported this task somewhat automated, complete electronic grade reporting would greatly ease the administrative burden of this task for institutions. The Florida Information Resource Network (FIRN) is currently utilized for electronic transfer of grades by a few institutions and should be available for use by all public secondary and postsecondary institutions by December 1991.

Funding

Funding for financial aid offices is provided within the general operating budget of each institution. Additional support is often available through other institutional administrative areas, such as the registrar's and admissions offices, where staff time is dedicated to student financial aid duties. Also, as discussed above, special legislative appropriations have been made to the State University System to create new positions within the financial aid offices.

State universities may collect up to five percent of the student tuition and matriculation fee per credit hour for financial aid purposes (Section 240.209, F.S.). Revenues from this fee remain at the campus. A minimum of 50 percent of these funds are to be used to provide financial aid based on absolute need. The university may use up to 15 percent of the fees collected to pay for administrative costs associated with the administration of financial aid programs (Rule 6C-7.3, FAC). In 1988-89 resident students enrolled in the SUS were assessed $3.95 per credit hour for lower level courses and $4.15 for upper level courses. As indicated in Table 6, almost $1 million of the $6.4 million disbursed from student financial aid fee collections in 1987-88 was expended on the administration of aid programs. Table 7 displays for 1987-88 by institution the amounts collected from the financial aid fee, the amounts disbursed, and the difference. A few institutions disbursed exactly the amount collected and a few disbursed more

than what was collected. At other institutions, collections exceeded disbursements, providing a carry-over to the next academic year.

Statute also provides for community colleges to assess for financial aid purposes up to five percent of the total student tuition or matriculation fees collected (Section 240.35(6), F.S.). Up to 25 percent or $125,000, whichever is greater, of the fees collected may be used to assist students who demonstrate academic merit or who participate in athletics, public service, cultural arts, and other extracurricular programs as determined by the institution. The 1989 Legislature amended the statute to allow a minimum of 50 percent of the balance of these funds to be used to provide financial aid based on absolute need; the remainder may be used for academic merit and other purposes. This modification, in effect, reduces the total funds that must be expended on financial aid based on absolute need. None of these funds, however, may be used for direct or indirect administrative purposes or salaries. In 1987-88, $5,062,598 were collected among the 26 colleges

TABLE 6

STUDENT FINANCIAL AID FEE COLLECTIONS AND DISBURSEMENTS
JULY 1, 1987 - JUNE 30, 1988

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

	TOTAL COLLECTIONS	TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	EXPENDITURES		
			NEED-BASED	OTHER AID	ADMINISTRATION
UF	$1,986,921	$2,167,164	$1,010,000	$ 859,126	$298,038
FSU	1,257,284	1,005,240	515,416	301,232	188,592
FAMU	348,394	298,524	251,696	4,000	42,828
USF	1,125,987	974,515	513,365	292,252	168,898
FAU	389,527	389,438	198,909	132,100	58,429
UWF	251,260	246,402	127,251	81,462	37,689
UCF	492,561	490,000	291,624	122,876	75,500
FIU	628,474	628,474	360,888	157,119	110,467
UNF	198,561	225,830	99,093	108,530	18,207
TOTAL	**$6,678,969**	**$6,425,587**	**$3,368,242**	**$2,058,697**	**$998,648**

Source: Board of Regents, 1989.

TABLE 7

FINANCIAL AID FEES COLLECTED AND DISBURSED
1987-88

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

INSTITUTION	AMOUNT COLLECTED	AMOUNT DISBURSED	DIFFERENCE
FAMU	$ 348,394.00	$ 298,524.00	$ + 49,870.00
FAU	389,527.00	389,438.00	+ 89.00
FIU	628,473.81	628,473.81	----
FSU	1,257,283.44	1,005,239.94	+ 252,043.50
UCF	492,560.52	490,000.00	+ 2,560.52
UF	1,986,921.00	2,167,164.00	- 180,243.00
UNF	198,561.00	225,830.00	- 27,269.00
USF	1,125,987.00	974,515.00	+ 151,472.00
UWF	251,260.00	246,402.00	+ 4,858.00

Source: Board of Regents, 1989.

assessing the financial aid fee. Tables 8 and 9 display the amounts expended and numbers of awards granted from this fee. In that year, 46 percent of the $5 million collected was dedicated to financial aid based on absolute need and 25 percent of these monies provided athletic scholarships for community college students. Table 10 summarizes financial aid fee information for 1986-87 and 1987-88 at the community colleges. As with the universities, some institutions supplemented the financial aid fee funds and disbursed more than the amount collected and transferred. In many colleges, however, fewer monies were expended than were collected.

Finally, the 1989 Legislature amended statutes pertaining to two State financial aid programs to assist institutions with program administration costs. Institutions may now use up to 10 percent of expenditures associated with the College Career Work Experience Program as well as with the Public School Work Experience Program for program administration.

TABLE 8

STUDENT FINANCIAL AID FEE
AMOUNT EXPENDED BY CATEGORY FOR FINANCIAL AID
1987-88

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

COLLEGE	ATHLETICS	PUBLIC SERVICE	CULTURAL ARTS	OTHER ACTIVITIES	ABSOLUTE NEED	ACCADEMIC MERIT	TOTAL
Brevard	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 140,348	$ 113,247	$ 253,595
Broward	48,317	594	8,462	0	252,978	93,165	403,516
Central Florida	35,520	0	13,988	6,530	7,060	16,853	79,951
Chipola	68,008	1,301	8,349	4,090	0	0	81,748
Daytona Beach	45,974	0	0	0	120,934	100,759	267,667
Edison	30,101	2,020	16,336	293	39,348	27,364	115,462
Fla. CC @ Jax.	56,596	0	0	0	101,615	48,795	207,006
Florida Keys	0	0	0	23,275	4,763	2,024	30,062
Gulf Coast	50,000	0	0	0	13,584	13,584	77,168
Hillsborough	41,370	0	8,630	8,060	130,917	36,435	225,412
Indian River	100,000	0	25,000	0	24,268	19,295	168,563
Lake City	28,675	0	0	0	0	28,675	57,350
Lake-Sumter	21,257	5,250	7,250	0	4,000	5,000	42,757
Manatee	32,472	0	15,622	1,906	12,137	4,572	66,709
Miami-Dade	212,488	99,387	0	0	935,626	0	1,247,501
North Florida	35,007	0	0	0	0	23,843	58,850
Okaloosa-Walton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Palm Beach	69,099	0	0	0	190,984	72,026	332,109
Pasco-Hernando	31,171	0	0	4,379	17,527	27,811	80,888
Pensacola	50,890	0	0	2,184	91,037	53,390	197,501
Polk	34,612	14,647	6,691	0	8,110	28,897	92,957
St. Johns River	11,154	456	3,420	912	0	12,308	28,250
St. Petersburg	73,130	0	27,588	0	0	203,681	304,399
Santa Fe	83,798	0	17,009	14,846	82,714	9,347	207,714
Seminole	22,241	0	19,435	69	22,672	28,329	92,746
South Florida	48,311	0	9,105	0	20,893	30,834	109,143
Tallahassee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Valencia	18,440	11,185	21,977	0	108,076	73,896	233,574
Total	$1,248,631	$134,840	$208,862	$66,544	$2,329,591	$1,074,130	$5,062,598

Source: State Board of Community Colleges, 1989.

TABLE 9

TOTAL NUMBER OF AWARDS GRANTED BY CATEGORY 1987-88

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

COLLEGE	ATHLETICS	PUBLIC SERVICE	CULTURAL ARTS	OTHER ACTIVITIES	ABSOLUTE NEED	ACCADEMIC MERIT	TOTAL
Brevard	0	0	0	0	566	271	837
Broward	113	3	23	0	904	183	1,226
Central Florida	59	0	24	13	19	28	143
Chipola	35	3	18	9	0	0	65
Daytona Beach	59	0	0	0	235	147	441
Edison	48	4	29	1	97	48	227
Fla. CC @ Jax.	97	0	0	0	279	53	429
Florida Keys	0	0	0	45	11	24	80
Gulf Coast	41	0	0	0	24	24	89
Hillsborough	70	0	41	18	306	68	503
Indian River	47	0	68	0	143	22	280
Lake City	46	0	0	0	0	61	107
Lake-Sumter	49	24	31	0	16	20	140
Manatee	51	0	53	5	25	7	141
Miami-Dade	298	252	0	0	4,192	0	4,742
North Florida	46	0	0	0	0	75	121
Okaloosa-Walton	No Financial Aid Fee Charged						
Palm Beach	58	0	0	0	511	106	675
Pasco-Hernando	55	0	0	12	99	67	233
Pensacola	55	0	0	11	371	90	527
Polk	54	38	15	0	57	59	223
St. Johns River	30	2	9	2	0	28	71
St. Petersburg	77	0	47	0	0	585	709
Santa Fe	99	0	22	27	165	11	324
Seminole	36	0	39	1	38	57	171
South Florida	16	0	173	0	26	44	259
Tallahassee	No Financial Aid Fee Charged						
Valencia	36	36	65	0	219	151	507
Total	1,575	362	657	144	8,303	2,229	13,270

Source: State Board of Community Colleges, 1989.

TABLE 10

FINANCIAL AID FEES AVAILABLE AND DISBURSED
1986-87 AND 1987-88

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

COLLEGES	--1986-87-- AMOUNT AVAILABLE	AMOUNT DISBURSED	DIFFERENCE	--1987-88-- AMOUNT AVAILABLE	AMOUNT DISBURSED	DIFFERENCE
Brevard	$ 245,543	$ 233,285	$ + 12,258	$ 253,595	$ 253,595	$ -----
Broward	393,655	501,287	- 107,632	401,132	403,516	- 2,384
Central Florida	64,927	54,399	+ 10,528	79,952	79,951	+ 1
Chipola	50,000	50,000	-----	81,748	81,748	-----
Daytona Beach	202,476	198,753	+ 3,723	212,967	267,667	- 54,700
Edison	110,066	104,241	+ 5,825	122,979	115,462	+ 7,517
Fla. CC @ Jax.	201,002	164,463	+ 36,539	207,006	207,006	-----
Florida Keys	23,533	23,423	+ 110	26,955	30,062	- 3,107
Gulf Coast	76,386	76,392	- 6	77,167	77,168	- 1
Hillsborough	252,348	246,682	+ 5,666	263,079	225,412	+ 37,667
Indian River	151,704	78,637	+ 73,067	125,000	168,563	- 43,563
Lake City	61,868	72,697	- 10,829	57,350	57,350	-----
Lake-Sumter	33,063	36,726	- 3,663	40,523	42,757	- 2,234
Manatee	63,595	62,669	- 926	74,152	66,709	+ 7,443
Miami-Dade	1,065,928	1,065,928	-----	1,247,501	1,247,501	-----
North Florida	48,704	45,729	+ 2,975	49,037	58,850	- 9,813
Okaloosa-Walton	NO FINANCIAL AID FEE CHARGED			NO FINANCIAL AID FEE CHARGED		
Palm Beach	237,805	148,287	+ 89,518	285,329	332,109	- 46,780
Pasco-Hernando	57,214	56,030	+ 1,184	81,140	80,888	+ 252
Pensacola	189,596	170,027	+ 19,569	199,433	197,501	+ 1,932
Polk	80,618	66,636	+ 13,982	92,354	92,957	- 603
St. Johns River	28,889	24,443	+ 4,446	32,637	28,250	+ 4,387
St. Petersburg	359,864	294,523	+ 65,341	388,133	304,399	+ 83,734
Santa Fe	210,489	207,625	+ 2,864	229,116	207,714	+ 21,402
Seminole	104,140	90,546	+ 13,594	112,021	92,746	+ 19,275
South Florida	50,000	49,956	+ 44	125,000	109,143	+ 15,857
Tallahassee	NO FINANCIAL AID FEE CHARGED			NO FINANCIAL AID FEE CHARGED		
Valencia	238,122	244,198	- 6,076	255,912	233,574	+ 22,338

Source: State Board of Community Colleges, 1989.

Service to Students

Information concerning institutional financial aid service for students was obtained in various ways. The survey of financial aid directors included thirteen items related to service (Appendix A). Service was also discussed with directors and student representatives as part of the institutional site visits to seven campuses. Finally, twelve items centering on financial aid were included in the general student survey completed by a sample of public university and community college students (Appendix B). These are summarized below under topical areas.

Access to financial aid office services and students' level of satisfaction with access was not uniform across the university and community college systems. Office hours for most of the institutions were limited to 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Some institutions have reduced daily hours or do not provide service on specific weekdays. Evening access was found among half of the community college offices; two were open regularly on Saturdays. A few of the university offices were open one evening per week, and only one was open Saturdays. Responses on the student survey revealed that community college students were generally more satisfied with office hours than were university students. Eighty-eight percent of the college students responding to the item indicated they were very or somewhat satisfied while 56 percent of the university respondents were very or somewhat satisfied. Part-time community college students, who might be most affected by lack of access during hours beyond the 8-to-5 schedule, were generally satisfied with service hours.

Availability and utilization of financial aid information was a second aspect of service to students. Findings from the directors' survey indicated that aid information is largely available to both community college and university students by telephone. Less common sources of information were CHOICES (a computerized system), off-campus centers, and other campus centers. Additional university sources included dial-in computer access, library searches, and admissions. Only a few community colleges and universities offered other computerized financial aid information to students, although several institutions are considering this option. Students were queried about their experiences in contacting financial aid offices by telephone. University respondents reported greater difficulty than community college students in reaching the office by phone. Most juniors and seniors stated that phone communication took "several tries" or was "impossible". Few students indicated that they personally used CHOICES (F-CIDS). Some financial aid directors described CHOICES (F-CIDS) as not "user friendly" and often requiring constant direct assistance from a counselor. Fifty-four percent of the student respondents said they first received financial aid information for college in high school. However, 27 percent indicated they had never received aid information. Among all student respondents, only 40 percent had applied for financial aid at their current institution.

The student survey also asked how long students had to wait if they visited the financial aid office. Approximately 50 percent of the university students responded they had to wait more than 15 minutes for service, while 36 percent of community college students waited in excess of 15 minutes. Computer problems were the most frequently cited reason for waiting beyond 15 minutes.

Service to special subpopulations varied among the institutions. In the Community College System, 19 of the 28 colleges provided aid information through special projects or strategies to racial/ethnic minorities, 18 did so for disable students, and 17 for evening students. In comparison, all of the state universities provided special service to racial/ethnic groups, while about half did so for evening and part-time students. Only two universities provided such information specifically to disabled students. Few institutions had personnel designated to serve these subgroups.

Many students want or need to meet with a financial aid staff member to receive counseling. As of Fall 1989, federal regulations required all students receiving Stafford or supplemental loans to participate in loan entrance and exit counseling. Half of the colleges and seven of the nine universities reported conducting student exit interviews of all financial aid recipients on a regular basis. Directors of aid offices were asked to identify staff members who perform counseling functions. In some institutions, counseling duties were reserved for professional staff, while in other institutions support staff, including clerks and work/study students, provided counseling. The student survey asked those students who had applied for financial aid if they had had a personal meeting with a counselor. Twenty-nine percent of the university respondents had met with a counselor, compared to 48 percent of community college respondents. Blacks were more likely to have met with counselors than either whites or Hispanics. Almost twice as many black respondents had seen a counselor than had not. A breakdown by class level shows that a decreasing proportion of each class, from freshmen to seniors, met with a counselor.

Finally, students who had applied for aid were asked to rate the Financial Aid Office staff. Community college students tended to rate staff higher in terms of courtesy, helpfulness, and knowledge. Generally, however, in both sectors the level of satisfaction was above average with only approximately five per cent of the respondents indicating that staff were never courteous, helpful, or knowledgeable.

V. ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Role of State-Level Offices in the Administration of Student Financial Aid

Florida's student financial aid policy has been that State student financial aid be administered by a central state agency (Section 240.437, F.S.). The Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) is the designated State office to perform administrative functions and has statutory responsibility to administer selected student financial aid programs for Florida's postsecondary education institutions. The Commission believes that existing State policy supporting centralized administration of all student financial aid programs should be examined. The great diversity and growth which characterize Florida's higher education system are expected to intensify in the future, and the subsequent need for a central State office to coordinate and administer State and selected federal financial aid programs may not diminish.

Those programs currently administered by the State Office of Student Financial Assistance include 20 state and two federal programs for students at public and private postsecondary institutions. The workload of this office has increased yearly as new financial aid programs have been created and other responsibilities, especially those related to loan management, have expanded. At present, OSFA does not have the research personnel to generate adequate information and analyze data concerning the office's operations and financial assistance for the State's postsecondary students. Appropriate and timely data are essential to evaluate State financial aid programs and assess policies related to student financial aid in Florida. Equally important is planning capacity to anticipate and prepare for future State needs in financial aid for postsecondary students. The Commission's **Master Plan Update** (1988) recommended that the Office of Student Financial Assistance place priority on continuing the progress made in the development of a comprehensive data base for strategic financial aid planning. The Commission supports the Office of Student Financial Assistance's current budget request for a special unit to coordinate research and prepare reports on State programs. New staff, however, should focus on planning activities as well.

Recommendation:

1. **The Office of Student Financial Assistance should maintain at least one staff position that is dedicated to research and long-range planning.** The comprehensive collection and analysis of financial aid data as well as long-range planning for those programs administered by the Office should be conducted within the context of other sources of student assistance.

State and federal rules, regulations, and procedures associated with student financial aid programs undergo frequent change. These dynamic conditions create stress for institutional as well as state-level personnel in aid offices and underscore the necessity for lines of communications between OSFA and the institutions that are open, clear, and timely. Discussions with institutional directors of student financial aid revealed that communications with the State office have improved in recent years and that the working relationship between the institutions and OSFA is generally good. Financial

aid directors noted, however, that they had minimal involvement with new policies or procedures before they were implemented. The directors and OSFA currently meet semiannually during the state-wide Florida Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators meetings.

Recommendation:

2. **The Office of Student Financial Assistance should assess its current practices and level of consultation with directors of aid programs.** During public hearings, directors of financial aid offices and representatives of the Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors testified that they were not kept well informed by OSFA, particularly in relation to the implementation of new or modified procedures. Since the Director of the State Office of Financial Assistance now meets quarterly with the Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors and the Council is comprised of representatives of public and private postsecondary education institutions and of students, OSFA should involve the Council to the fullest extent possible in discussions concerning procedural and programmatic changes in financial aid prior to implementation of such changes.

The Florida Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors provides a forum for the discussion of aid issues, including those relative to the administration of aid programs. The composition of the Council allows for representation from public and private postsecondary institutions of all types as well as from lending institutions and the student sector. In its advisory capacity to the Commissioner of Education on financial aid matters, the Council has the opportunity to play an important role in airing directors' concerns with administrative aspects of aid programs and in making policy recommendations relative to those concerns. The Commission supports the Council's charge and encourages it to continue moving in the direction of policy development.

The State University System oversees the administration of selected student financial aid programs and resources for the nine public universities. Additionally, system support provided through data collection and dissemination increases access for State-level policy makers to financial aid office personnel and program information that is necessary in assessing administrative concerns. Although most university financial aid directors interviewed contacted the Office of Student Financial Assistance directly with aid program administration questions, few knew of a liaison for financial aid matters on the SUS staff. Generally, there was little indication that the aid directors communicated with the SUS on financial aid concerns. Direct access to OSFA personnel is imperative for institutional directors, yet much information relative to the administration of financial aid programs is not within OSFA's functional responsibilities and thus must be available through the office of the Board of Regents. Access to such information is important to other State agencies and bodies. Additionally, the absence of a clearly identified office or individual to supervise student affairs at the Board level in the SUS diminishes opportunities for the discussion of many student-related issues such as financial aid. Institutional financial aid directors should be encouraged to utilize SUS staff as resources, particularly in representing their concerns at the system level.

Recommendation:

3. **The Chancellor of the State University System should designate a staff person within the central office to coordinate student affairs, including financial aid concerns.** Institutional financial aid directors should utilize this individual as a resource in representing their collective concerns at the system level.

The Division of Community Colleges collects very limited information on the administration of student financial aid programs. At present, the Division's data base does not provide adequate information to determine aid office personnel characteristics or to profile aid to individual students. Examples of information available from the management information system could include position titles and descriptions, numbers of headcount and FTE positions, and salaries. Information should be available through the Division's management information system to identify personnel within specific administrative units such as the financial aid office. Such comprehensive information will allow local as well as State-level administrators, and others, base-line descriptive and quantitative data for comparative purposes.

Coordination through the State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) for the financial aid offices in the 28 community colleges has been minimal. The community college aid directors contacted during this study indicated that very little communication involving financial aid occurs between the institutions and the State Board as the directors contact OSFA directly with their concerns. Further, few directors knew who to contact on the Division of Community Colleges staff if they needed information concerning student financial aid. At the Division itself, staff said that the specific concerns of the financial aid directors would determine which individual in the State office could be of assistance. While the Commission does not support unnecessary staff expansion in State agencies, the financial aid officers should have access to one individual in the Division who is cognizant of student aid issues and who can provide a single point of contact for institutional financial aid offices within the Community College System.

Recommendations:

4. **The Division of Community Colleges should maintain a data base sufficient to provide information on administrative and staff personnel, administrative units, and individual student financial aid awards.**

5. **The Division of Community Colleges should designate one individual as a liaison between the Division and the institutions to coordinate student affairs, including student financial aid, and to provide guidance and oversight at the system level.** This individual should actively participate in the newly created Financial Aid Commission in the Florida Association of Community Colleges.

Institutional Financial Aid Office Staff

A major factor in program administration is the quantity and quality of staff available. When compared with recent national data, Florida's public universities and community colleges show different staffing characteristics. Special appropriations to the SUS to enhance student services generally, and often financial aid in particular, have augmented the number of staff positions at the institutional level. Community colleges have not received similar appropriations. The Commission's consultants found that while the majority of community colleges exhibited staffing levels at least comparable to national averages, approximately one third of the colleges reported staff information that placed them below the national average. The Commission concluded that some community colleges have not dedicated sufficient resources to adequately administer financial aid programs. In some cases there is clear need for personnel to serve students, while in other cases there is need for additional computer hardware and software support.

Recommendations:

6. **The State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) should direct the colleges to report on their staffing levels in the financial aid office.** If adequate personnel are not in place to administer aid programs in an efficient, timely, and correct manner, the SBCC should address these needs as a budget issue. The SBCC should monitor the institutions and their efforts to improve the level of staff support in financial aid offices.

7. **Florida student financial aid policy should allow community colleges to utilize up to 15 percent of the funds generated by their student financial aid fee for administrative costs associated with administration of financial aid programs.** Administrative expenditures from this source should not reduce the amount available for need-based aid. Although institutions should have the flexibility of assigning these funds on the basis of their individual needs, in no instance should the monies designated for program administration from the financial aid fee supplant funds previously dedicated to the administration of student financial aid at the college.

In addition to the number of staff, a concomitant concern among financial aid directors was the quality of these personnel. A consistent theme raised in the interviews with directors and in public hearings for this study revolved around inadequate compensation for professional staff responsible for evaluating applications and counseling students. Financial aid directors believed that low salaries were associated with high turnover rates and inability to maintain good staff because the counselors advanced to other positions with more attractive compensation levels. The tendency in institutions to regard these personnel as non-professional staff is counter to national patterns. The consultants maintained that relegating counselors to a sub-professional status appears to be a significant barrier to professional growth in the field and a contributor to higher-than-average turnover at the counselor level. In a recommendation addressing this issue, the consultants called for an examination of the classification and compensation of financial

aid specialists, evaluators, and counselors and consideration of alternatives to eliminate salary disparities, promote their professional status, and reduce employee turnover.

The absence of a career ladder for professional financial aid personnel was a related issue which surfaced in this study. Directors believe that counselors, evaluators, and specialists seek other professional employment in large part because of the lack of career potential in these positions. Within the SUS, the large increase in the number of FTE Coordinator positions in this decade suggests that the institutions have used this higher-ranking position with an A&P classification to provide a career ladder for eligible employees. This practice will not, however, provide promotional opportunities for the majority of evaluators and specialists who lack the academic credentials to qualify for a Coordinator position. As long as these positions are classified within the USPS plan as it is now structured, there is little flexibility to recognize growth in knowledge, skills, and abilities which usually accompany training and experience. Rather than reclassify these positions, alternatives should be investigated within the USPS plan structure, including possible expansion of the USPS plan with the goal of increasing flexibility within the plan itself.

Salary levels for financial aid personnel should be commensurate with the duties performed as well as the professional experience and academic preparation required for the position. Information collected from financial aid directors and conclusions reached by the study's consultants indicated that compensation levels, especially for financial aid personnel who counsel students and evaluate applications, are a major detriment to recruiting and retaining qualified personnel. Findings from this study generally show that financial aid office personnel who evaluate applications and counsel students are not adequately compensated for their work by their institutions.

Recommendations:

8. **Salary levels of personnel in student financial aid offices in public colleges and universities should be raised as appropriate to reflect the level of responsibility as well as the professional and academic credentials required for employment.**

9. **The Board of Regents should revise the University Support Personnel System plan to provide more flexibility within the plan for career ladder opportunities.** Such modifications should recognize and reward skills and abilities gained through training and experience. Step increases may be a viable option. The current restructuring initiative to establish a Coordinator class within the Administrative and Professional plan is laudable as it will provide an entry-level professional position in the financial aid office. The need remains, however, to address the career ladder issue for financial aid office employees classified under the USPS plan.

Pre-service and in-service employee training is important in all occupations and professions, but the rapid changes that characterize work with student

financial aid demand that constant attention be given to personnel needs to remain current in their areas. Statute requires, as part of the student financial aid planning and development program administered by the Department of Education, that funds be allocated annually for a comprehensive program of student financial aid and to initiate "activities of inservice training for student financial aid administrators" (Section 240.437, F.S.). The Office of Student Financial Assistance provides some training. Data collected indicated that institutions have relied upon traditional training techniques such as procedures manuals and in-house training for new employee orientation and memoranda and meetings for staff up-dating. Although quality training materials are available commercially, there apparently has been no organized effort at the State level and little individual effort at the institutional level to incorporate teleconferencing or audio/video training materials into pre-service or in-service training activities. Institutions with a small financial aid office staff may find these kinds of training materials unnecessary. Nonetheless, most of the SUS institutions and approximately half of the CCS institutions maintain staffs of at least ten employees (headcount).

Additionally, the use of part-time employees from work/study students to counselors would suggest that locally or commercially prepared audio/video training aids would be useful and efficient. Since some materials could conceivably be used by all public institutions, coordination of initiatives to purchase or prepare and distribute such materials could be facilitated at the State level. Software sharing and group purchasing could be utilized to reduce costs associated with a state-wide training approach.

Recommendations:

10. **The State should recognize that financial aid office staff training needs exceed those of many other institutional units and additional efforts should be made available to provide timely, appropriate, and adequate pre-service and in-service training opportunities.**

11. **As the designated State-level agency charged with providing training, the Office of Student Financial Assistance should expand its efforts in coordinating state-wide training for student financial aid personnel.** Commercially or locally prepared training materials should be made available by the Office of Student Financial Assistance in cooperation with the Florida Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators to all student financial aid offices. For example, financial aid office personnel should have access to pre-service and in-service training activities that incorporate human relations and communications components. The Department of Education should seek appropriate funding to support such training efforts within the Office of Student Financial Assistance.

Program and Administrative Concerns

Both the numbers and types of student financial assistance have increased in Florida's aid portfolio. The proliferation of programs has been accompanied by a corresponding increase in the administrative burden placed on college and

university financial aid directors. Programs directed at specific types of students and application requirements that often have not been synchronized with existing programs have all produced additional workloads on those responsible for processing the applications and awards. Numerous teacher and nursing financial assistance programs as well as the existence of two state work/study programs (Florida is unique in this regard) are examples of areas where proliferation has occurred. In addition to greater diversification in State programs, aid verification and validation processes imposed by the federal government have created additional stress for aid office employees and adversely affected the administration of student aid programs.

Interviews and testimony received from financial aid directors underscored the need to address program proliferation and administration in this study. In addition to state and federal programs, institutions have access to a number of other sources of financial aid, some of which are discretionary while others are earmarked for specific groups of students. The Commission recognizes and endorses the importance of private giving for student financial assistance purposes. Further, the Commission wishes to preserve the integrity of private contributions made through unique financial aid programs sponsored by individuals or organizations and designed for special student subpopulations. Irrespective of the source of funding, however, efforts should be made to standardize basic application requirements and criteria in order to reduce administrative tasks. Also, the understaffing and inadequate training problems discussed above make it difficult, if not impossible, for financial aid office staff to keep abreast of changes in established programs and of the implementation of new programs. To ease the adjustments needed when new programs are created, the Commission supports suggestions from aid directors and the State Office of Student Financial Assistance that a lead-in period be required prior to the implementation of a new program during which time no awards are made.

Recommendations:

12. **The Department of Education should recommend guidelines to standardize and generally simplify student financial aid program criteria and other requirements, including application deadlines.** Once guidelines are developed, the Department of Education should act to consolidate, with the assistance of the Legislature, existing aid programs that are similar in nature. These guidelines should also be used when new State administered student financial aid programs are under consideration to discourage the establishment of new programs when they can be consolidated with existing ones.

13. **Legislation establishing new student financial aid programs should allow for a one-year lead-in period to provide State and local administrators time to disseminate information on a new program and to provide adequate time to implement administrative processes at State and institutional levels.** Prior to establishing new programs, consideration should be given to incorporating new objectives within existing programs.

The Florida Student Assistance Grant (FSAG), a need-based aid program for full-time undergraduate students attending eligible Florida institutions, was specifically identified as problematical by directors of financial aid. In 1987-88, 15,648 students received FSAG awards totaling $14,349,256, making this the largest program serving students in the State with financial assistance and comprising 37 percent of all funds disbursed in that academic year.

The administration of this program was discussed at length during institutional site visits as well as during public hearings for this study. Financial aid directors and other institutional representatives strongly urged that the FSAG program be decentralized to allow each institution to determine awardees rather than continue awarding from the State's Office of Student Financial Assistance. OSFA believes that only centralized program administration can assure that the neediest students receive these funds. To facilitate application by the student, OSFA has a common, standardized application process which utilizes a federal process for need-based aid. In essence, an applicant has only to check a few boxes indicating that he or she is interested in applying for this grant. This minimal application process may not be preserved if all State institutions are permitted to administer the program locally and maintain independent application processes. Also, less-than-adequate reporting from the institutions that has occurred in the past would further impede the proper distribution of the grants if this were a campus-based program.

In response to some of the problems cited above, OSFA is investigating the possibility of reducing the paperwork associated with the program and of assisting institutions to implement electronic transfer capability. Concerning the distribution of awards, OSFA presently advances to each institution in early August 100 percent of the current year's estimated need to serve eligible FSAG students. This estimate is based on historical information from funds disbursed the previous Fall semester and forwarded to the institution two to three weeks prior to registration. The school then has discretion to disburse the FSAG funds to students during or following registration.

Community colleges indicated that many of their neediest students do not register until the last minute whereas universities, by and large, do not have this problem. The Legislature recognized the institutions' petition for campus-based financial aid when it approved the five percent financial aid fee. Institutions have the flexibility to carry forward the balance of unused funds in this account from one year to the next. Many institutions have carried forward very large balances, sometimes in excess of $1 million, in monies collected through the financial aid fee but not disbursed to students. While current Florida law does not prohibit this practice, it is clearly not the intent of the law to avoid distributing funds collected from students for the purpose of providing financial assistance to students. In the case of the Community College System, half of the 26 colleges that assessed this fee in 1987-88 dedicated more of their institutional financial aid fee dollars to athletic scholarships than to aid based on absolute need. Given the fact that many community college students apply for admission following the April 15th deadline for consideration for a Florida Student Assistance Grant yet many of these same students are financially needy, awarding aid to these students from

funds generated by the financial aid fee would be an appropriate use of these monies. The financial aid fee account is controlled by the institution and disbursements may be made on short notice to serve those students judged by the institution to have need.

Recommendations:

14. **Those community colleges that assess the student financial aid fee should consider allocating funds from this account to provide financial aid relief for students who meet requirements for Florida Student Assistance Grants but who seek admission following closure of the FSAG program qualifying period.**

15. **Funds collected through the student financial aid fee should be disbursed to students as financial assistance as quickly as possible.**

The Commission supports a review of the centralized administration of the Florida Student Assistance Grant program as the most effective means of assuring that the State's neediest students receive these funds. As the State's largest need-based financial aid program, serving both the public and private postsecondary sectors, program administration will be complex. Modifications in the FSAG program require more time and review than the timeframe of the current study permitted. Nonetheless, the issue of efficient program administration needs to be addressed and a plan developed to identify and implement necessary improvements in current administrative practices.

Recommendation:

16. **The Office of Student Financial Assistance, in cooperation with the Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors, the Board of Regents, and the State Board of Community Colleges should develop a plan by July 1, 1990 for the improvement of the administration of the Florida Student Assistance Grant program.** Among the areas addressed should be: a plan to pilot test a decentralized FSAG program among a sample of public and private community colleges and universities, electronic transfer of selected student record information, differential application dates, and paperwork reduction. Also, among the issues examined, the plan should consider the feasibility of identifying within the Florida Student Assistance Grant a separate or subprogram for public universities and another for community colleges. Careful consideration should be given to the ramifications of separate programs, including proper monitoring of program administration.

Automation of Financial Aid Offices

Automation is a multifaceted issue. Computer capabilities between the institutions and the State financial aid office must be compatible and utilized. Automation at the institutional level should greatly enhance the efficiency of processing student financial aid files as well as improving the office management of program data for State and federal reporting purposes.

Concurrently, automation at the State level must be functional and accessible to institutions to facilitate electronic transfer of data. The automation of financial aid programs now and in the future has a significant impact on the administration of the programs.

Adequate and appropriate computerization must be available and utilized. A major contributor to better program administration is electronic transfer capability. Florida was the first state in the nation with a comprehensive system in place to transfer student records electronically among all levels of education. Public education institutions can send student records electronically via the Florida Information Resource Network (FIRN). The system, Florida Automated System for Transferring Education Records (F.A.S.T.E.R.), was operative and available July 1, 1989, to school districts and public postsecondary education institutions. Although few colleges and universities currently use F.A.S.T.E.R., by December 1991, all public school districts, community colleges, and universities must be transferring student academic transcripts electronically. This system should also be utilized to provide electronic transfer of student financial aid transcripts.

Recommendations:

17. **The Articulation Coordinating Committee, which has oversight responsibility for the Florida Automated System for Transferring Education Records (F.A.S.T.E.R.), should develop plans to implement the electronic transfer of student financial aid transcripts within F.A.S.T.E.R.** Utilization of electronic transfer of financial aid transcript information should reduce some of the administrative burden currently experienced by institutions in the processing of aid data and accelerate the award process. Additionally, to facilitate the transfer of information to the State Office of Student Financial Assistance, F.A.S.T.E.R. should incorporate student data in the form required by OSFA, including cumulative grade point average and credits earned in the previous academic year.

18. **The State Board of Community Colleges should provide the assistance necessary to facilitate the automation of financial aid offices to see that the systems and procedures implemented by the community colleges are compatible with the State Office of Student Financial Assistance.** Institutions should be encouraged to share existing software that has proven effective and to jointly develop new capabilities where necessary. A time frame should be developed to assist those institutions that currently have poor or inadequate automation to strengthen their computer capabilities with respect to student financial aid.

19. **The State Office of Student Financial Assistance should continue to work closely with the State's financial aid directors on automation of State programs and procedures.** Institutional directors should be informed in advance of implementation concerning programmatic modifications in financial aid automation issues.

Service To Students

The quality of financial aid service experienced by students is dependent upon many factors, including when the student received information about financial aid programs, the quality of that information, the timeliness and correctness of the application, the attitude and knowledge level of aid office staff, and the adequacy of office resources (human and technological) to handle the workload, and so on. The work conducted in a financial aid office is extremely detailed and often stressful for both employees and students.

If students are exposed to financial aid information in high school and, for returning students, in the workplace or through other avenues, the opportunities to apply for aid and complete procedural requirements in a timely fashion are greatly enhanced. Institutions and State offices currently conduct workshops for counselors and sessions for students that encompass not only financial aid but other topics such as registration and curricula. The State Board of Community Colleges, in conjunction with the Division of Public Schools and the State University System, sponsors regional admissions and financial aid workshops tailored for district and high school supervisors, counselors, and others to foster students' successful transition from high school to college. The workshops focus on State and institutional policies and procedures. The Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors identified as one of its topics for 1989-90 the development of recommendations for implementing an Early Awareness program to inform pre-high school students of the types of financial assistance available for college. In addition to these initiatives, most high schools and other centers have access to F-CIDS (CHOICES), a state-wide computerized system containing information on more than 2,300 individual sources of financial aid. Although F-CIDS is widely available, it is apparent that it is not adequately utilized by students. The potential of such a system is great, particularly in light of the fact that it very transportable and currently available in prisons, community-based organizations, and vocational-rehabilitation centers as well as in educational institutions. Another computerized financial aid information system, STAR, is nearing completion at Florida State University. STAR, a microcomputer undergraduate scholarship data base, complements F-CIDS which contains only Florida information. Debt management will also be incorporated. The software will be available to the universities and community colleges by mid 1990.

Recommendation:

20. **The Department of Education should continue to support the provision of financial aid information to middle school and secondary education students.** In addition, the Department should support initiatives in the workplace and the general community targeting non-traditional students not currently in school with financial aid information.

Students' concerns with the complexity of financial aid forms and procedures surfaced frequently during campus site visits and through the student questionnaire. Concurrent complaints from many students were the difficulties they experienced in communicating with the financial aid office by telephone, long waits to meet with a financial aid staff person, and lack of information and confusion on who can resolve the student's problem. Although much of the

financial aid office's work is based on individual student situations, students would benefit from a telephone hotline system which would clarify common financial aid concerns. It should also be possible for students to access information related to their records, particularly to determine the status of a financial aid application.

Recommendations:

21. **Universities and community colleges that do not presently offer a telephone hotline for financial aid information should develop a telephone service which will provide students with information on their applications or assist students in identifying aid programs and completing application requirements.**

22. **The State Office of Student Financial Assistance, the Board of Regents, and the State Board of Community Colleges should jointly examine the feasibility of providing computer access for students to information related to their financial aid status.**

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to analyze the administration of student financial aid programs in Florida's public universities and community colleges. Concerns over efficient program administration and timely awarding of aid to students were driving forces behind the Legislative directive to the Commission. The study noted the phenomenal growth in the type and complexity of financial aid programs serving higher education. The impact of this growth on financial aid program administration, in turn, has been significant. Other factors that continue to contribute to program administration include student and institutional characteristics, financial aid office staffing patterns, automation, and State-level coordination of aid programs.

Institutional offices of student financial aid are critical in the student services area, yet, except for isolated cases, these offices have not received sufficient support to provide timely and adequate service to students. The study concluded that the administration of financial aid programs in public universities and community colleges was impeded by a number of problems, although neither type nor degree of difficulty is constant across all institutions. Among the more salient problems were insufficient staffing levels in many institutions, lower than average compensation for staff, and inadequate automation to serve financial aid office needs. Recommendations to address these and other issues identified in the study will require direct action as well as coordination on the part of the Legislature, State-level agencies, institutions, and others. Consistent and appropriate implementation of Florida's student financial aid policies should be enhanced as a result of the recommendations in this study.

APPENDIX A

Selected Results of Survey of Financial Aid Directors

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PLANNING COMMISSION

SURVEY OF DIRECTORS OF FINANCIAL AID OFFICES
IN FLORIDA PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES

FALL 1989

In Fall 1989 Commission staff developed a survey questionnaire to collect information from the directors of student financial aid offices in the State University System and the Community College System. The survey was distributed to the 37 directors by mail in October 1989 with a return request date of November 1, 1989. A 100 percent response rate was obtained although not all items were completed by all respondents. A copy of the questionnaire appears on the following pages. Data collected are displayed in tabular form on subsequent pages.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PLANNING COMMISSION
KNOTT BUILDING
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399

WILLIAM B. PROCTOR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

October 5, 1989

Alton Royal, Director
Financial Aid
Florida A & M University
Tallahassee, Florida 32307

Dear Mr. Royal:

The 1989 Legislature directed the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission to conduct an analysis of the administration of student financial aid programs in state universities and community colleges. Proviso language further stated that the analysis should examine "organizational structure; number, classification and compensation of staff, to include student employees; workload requirements; the process of applying for and receiving financial aid; work measures; and other issues related to the administration of this function." A report and recommendations are to be submitted to the State Board of Education and Legislature by February 1, 1990.

While portions of the information needed to respond to the Legislature's directive are available through state-level offices such as the Office of Student Financial Aid, the Board of Regents, and the State Board of Community Colleges, other relevant data and materials are best obtained from the directors of the institutional financial aid offices. For this reason, the attached survey instrument was designed to collect additional information. The instrument was developed by Commission staff and has been reviewed by State agency personnel, institutional representatives, and others. Results will be reported in the complete Commission study.

The survey should be completed by only one individual at each institution but should contain information for all campuses of a multi-campus institution. When returning the survey, please also send the following additional documents:

1. Your institution's FISAP report for 1987-88.
2. An institutional organizational chart which shows the position of the financial aid office in the institution.
3. An organizational chart for the financial aid office.
4. A list of the financial aid programs you administer.

We encourage you to comment on issues related to the overall purpose of the study as well as any of the specific areas delineated in the proviso language. These remarks should be attached to the survey instrument.

Affirmative action equal opportunity employer

Your response is essential to this study. Please return the survey and supporting documents by **November 1, 1989** to:

Dr. Cheryl Blanco, Policy Analyst
Postsecondary Education Planning Commission
Florida Education Center
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400

Should you have questions or concerns related to the survey or the study, please contact me at Suncom 278-7894 or (904) 488-7894. We appreciate the time and effort you devote to the survey.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Blanco
Policy Analyst

/db

Enclosure

cc: Pat Dallet

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PLANNING COMMISSION

SURVEY FOR DIRECTORS OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS

Name _____ Institution _____ Date _____

Instructions: Please answer each item. The survey is organized into topic areas with specific questions. You are encouraged to add additional comments as an attachment to the survey.

Organizational Structure

1. To which administrative officer in the institution do you report?

   ___ Vice President for Academic Affairs
   ___ Vice President for Student Affairs
   ___ Dean of Academic Affairs
   ___ Dean of Student Affairs
   ___ Other (specify) _____

2. If your institution has multiple campuses, do you supervise all financial aid programs at your institution?

   ___ Not a multi-campus institution
   ___ Yes, I supervise all campus financial aid offices
   ___ No, I do not supervise all campus financial aid offices

3. What assignable space does the Financial Aid Office have? _____Net Sq.Ft.

Personnel

4. How long have you held the position of Director of the Office of Financial Aid at this institution?

   ___ Less than 1 year
   ___ Between 1 and 2 years
   ___ 2 to 3 years
   ___ More than 3 years

5. What position did you hold prior to this director position?

   _____

6. What is the highest academic preparation you have?

   ___ Less than bachelor's degree
   ___ Bachelor's degree
   ___ Bachelor's degree but less than a master's
   ___ Master's degree
   ___ Master's degree but less than a doctorate
   ___ Doctorate

7. What area is your highest degree in? _____

8. Indicate the percentage of your time dedicated to the following activities:

   ___ % Program administration
   ___ % Staff management/supervision
   ___ % Student/parent counseling
   ___ % Institutional responsibilities beyond program administration
   ___ % Other

9. Indicate the number of employees (including students) who worked in the Financial Aid Office on the following dates:

September 30, 1987	_____	Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE)	_____	headcount
September 30, 1988	_____	FTE	_____	headcount
April 30, 1988	_____	FTE	_____	headcount
April 30, 1989	_____	FTE	_____	headcount

10. How many of the above were students?

September 30, 1987	_____	Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE)	_____	headcount
September 30, 1988	_____	FTE	_____	headcount
April 30, 1988	_____	FTE	_____	headcount
April 30, 1989	_____	FTE	_____	headcount

11. Provide the following information for the positions within your Financial Aid Office budget.

Category	# of FTE Positions	Status/ Classification[1]	Headcount Ethnicity[2]	Salary Range
Director	_____	_____	_____	_____
Associate Director	_____	_____	_____	_____
Assistant Director	_____	_____	_____	_____
Coordinator	_____	_____	_____	_____
Financial Aid Specialist	_____	_____	_____	_____
Evaluator	_____	_____	_____	_____
Counselor	_____	_____	_____	_____
Counselor Specialist	_____	_____	_____	_____
Clerical/Secretarial	_____	_____	_____	_____
Systems Coordinator/Analyst	_____	_____	_____	_____
Data Entry	_____	_____	_____	_____
Finance/Accounting	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other Professional	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other Clerical	_____	_____	_____	_____

[1] e.g., Administrative, Professional, Faculty, USPS, paraprofessional, etc.

[2] List the number of employees from each racial/ethnic group using the following symbols:

W = White, non-Hispanic	I = American Indian/Alaskan Native
B = Black, non-Hispanic	H = Hispanic
A = Asian/Pacific Islander	O = Other

Example: 1H, 3B (This means one Hispanic and three black employees in the position.)

12. Indicate the vacancy rate as a percentage of the full-time positions for groupings listed. Example: 25% means that one fourth of the full-time positions in the category were vacant at some time between June 1988 and July 1989.

Category Groups	Vacancy rate among full-time positions 1988-89
Director, Associate Director, Assistant Director, Coordinator	_____
Other professional staff	_____
Clerical, Secretarial, Systems Coordinator Analyst, Data Entry	_____
All other (specify)_____	_____

13. What kinds of job orientation and training do new employees receive prior to joining the financial aid office or during their first week of employment?

___ Procedures manual
___ Audio/video tapes
___ In-house seminars/workshops
___ Other (specify) _____

14. How are financial aid employees kept current on local, state, and federal financial aid programs, policies, and regulations? (Check all that apply)

___ Staff bulletins and memoranda
___ Staff meetings (circle one: daily, weekly, monthly, as needed)
___ Individual conferences between staff members
___ Routing of aid information
___ Attending local, state, and national conferences
___ Other _____

15. How do you measure the productivity of your staff? (Check all that apply)

___ Number of students served
___ Number of applications processed
___ Overtime hours accumulated
___ Reassignment of tasks
___ Unfinished or delayed tasks
___ Other _____
___ We do not measure staff productivity

16. How do you determine the need for additional permanent positions? (Check all that apply)

___ Number of students served
___ Number of applications processed
___ Overtime hours accumulated
___ Reassignment of tasks
___ Unfinished or delayed tasks
___ Other _____

17. Indicate your typical annual workload patterns by marking each month using the following numbers:

1 = low workload month
2 = average workload month
3 = high or peak workload month
4 = overload requiring overtime

___ January	___ May	___ September
___ February	___ June	___ October
___ March	___ July	___ November
___ April	___ August	___ December

Service to Students

18. What were your service hours for students during 1988-89?

	a.m.	p.m.	weekends
Fall 1988	_____	_____	_____
Spring 1989	_____	_____	_____
Summer 1989	_____	_____	_____

19. How many financial aid recipients (unduplicated headcount) did your institution have in 1988-89? _____

20. How many financial aid applicants (unduplicated headcount) did your institution have in 1988-89? _____

21. Is financial aid information from your office available through these sources to students?

	Yes	No	Under Consideration
Telephone	___	___	___
CHOICES	___	___	___
Other computerized information	___	___	___
Off-campus centers	___	___	___
Other on-campus centers	___	___	___
Other _____	___	___	___

22. Which employee(s) in the Financial Aid Office provide students with financial aid counseling (i.e., individualized in-depth financial aid information)? (Check all that apply)

___ Counselors	___ Coordinators
___ Secretaries	___ Director
___ Clerks	___ Assistant Director
___ Other _____	___ Aid Evaluators

23. How does the Financial Aid Office track an individual student's financial aid application? (Check all that apply)

___ Computer files
___ Traditional paper files
___ Other _____

24. How is your financial aid process evaluated? Do not consider audits in your response. (Check all that apply)

___ External evaluator from within the institution
___ External evaluator not from the institution
___ Internal (within the Office) formal evaluation
___ Internal (within the Office) informal evaluation
___ Student questionnaires
___ Student interviews
___ Employee interviews
___ Other _____
___ We do not evaluate the application process

25. How many appeals did you have in academic year 1988-89? _____

26. Describe what a student needs to do to contest an award decision by your office. Please attach written policies.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

27. Does your office provide financial aid information through special projects or strategies to the following groups?

	Yes	No	Under Consideration
Racial/ethnic minorities	___	___	___
Evening students	___	___	___
Part-time students	___	___	___
Disabled students	___	___	___

28. Are any financial aid office personnel specifically designated to serve any of the above groups?

	Yes	No	Under Consideration
Racial/ethnic minorities	___	___	___
Evening students	___	___	___
Part-time students	___	___	___
Disabled students	___	___	___

29. Do you regularly conduct student exit interviews of all recipients?

___ Yes ___ No

30. If you have a prepared form that is used in exit interviews, please attach a copy. If not, please briefly describe the areas covered in the interview.

_____

_____

_____

Automation of Financial Aid Services

31. Indicate the extent to which each task listed below is computerized in your office. Use the following scale:

1 = Not at all
2 = Somewhat
3 = Completely

___ Notification of award
___ Disbursement
___ Tracking of documents
___ Statistical analyses and reporting
___ Stafford certification
___ Management of funds
___ Analysis of need
___ Verification
___ Staff training/orientation
___ Student academic progress reviews
___ Inadequate/missing information
___ Packaging of awards
___ Loan collection
___ Financial aid transcripts
___ FISAP
___ Mass mailings
___ Other (specify) _____

32. From the tasks in item 35, list three tasks <u>not currently computerized</u> or <u>somewhat computerized</u> that you believe need to be added or expanded to increase the efficient and effective administration of aid programs at your institution:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

33. How well does your current level of automation serve your needs?

___ Very well
___ Moderately well
___ Not very well
___ Poorly

Thank you for your assistance with this study. Please return this survey and supporting documents by **November 1, 1989 to:**

Dr. Cheryl Blanco
Postsecondary Education Planning Commission
Florida Education Center
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400

TABLE 1

Q-9. INDICATE THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES (INCLUDING STUDENTS) WHO WORKED IN THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

(HEADCOUNT)

INSTITUTION	SEPT 30, 1987	APR 30, 1988	SEPT 20, 1988	APR 30, 1989
FAMU	34	35	35	35
FAU	19	18	18	19
FIU	31	27	37	35
UCF	61	17	63	43
FSU	67	68	70	72
UF	202	178	182	187
UNF	8	8	8	10
USF	78	75	84	70
UWF	9	9	9	9

(FTE)

INSTITUTION	SEPT 30, 1987	APR 30, 1988	SEPT 20, 1988	APR 30, 1989
FAMU	21.50	22.50	22.50	22.50
FAU	13.90	12.00	12.90	14.60
FIU	18.00	18.90	23.80	23.70
UCF	33.02	32.43	33.00	23.80
FSU	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
UF	89.25	83.50	86.25	86.50
UNF	7.50	7.50	7.50	9.00
USF	46.50	51.00	54.00	47.50
UWF	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00

TABLE 2

Q-9. INDICATE THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES (INCLUDING STUDENTS) WHO WORKED IN THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

(FTE)

INSTITUTION	SEPT 30, 1987	APR 30, 1988	SEPT 20, 1988	APR 30, 1989
Brevard	10.00	11.00	10.00	11.00
Broward	18.00	18.00	17.00	17.00
Central Florida	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
Chipola	3.50	3.75	3.50	3.75
Daytona Beach	11.00	11.00	11.00	12.00
Edison	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.50
Fl Comm. College @ Jax	33.00	33.00	33.00	33.00
Florida Keys	2.50	2.00	2.00	2.00
Gulf Coast	3.00	3.50	3.50	3.50
Hillsborough	12.00	12.00	12.00	13.00
Indian River	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50
Lake City	4.35	4.15	4.25	4.15
Lake-Sumter	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50
Manatee	6.00	6.00	6.00	7.00
Miami-Dade	82.00	83.00	83.00	85.00
North Florida	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Okaloosa-Walton	2.50	4.25	4.00	4.25
Palm Beach	8.00	8.00	8.00	10.00
Pasco Hernando	6.00	6.50	6.50	6.50
Pensacola	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00
Polk	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.00
St. Johns River	1.25	1.75	1.75	1.75
St. Petersburg	22.50	23.50	23.50	23.50
Santa Fe	24.00	24.00	25.00	25.00
Seminole	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
South Florida	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Tallahassee	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Valencia	13.00	14.00	13.00	14.00

(HEADCOUNT)

INSTITUTION	SEPT 30, 1987	APR 30, 1988	SEPT 20, 1988	APR 30, 1989
Brevard	15	15	15	15
Broward	28	28	27	27
Central Florida	8	8	8	7
Chipola	5	5	5	5
Daytona Beach	13	13	13	14
Edison	7	7	8	7
Fl Comm. College @ Jax	33	33	33	33
Florida Keys	3	2	2	2
Gulf Coast	4	5	5	5
Hillsborough	16	16	16	17
Indian River	5	5	5	5
Lake City	2778	3304	2960	3305
Lake-Sumter	2	2	2	2
Manatee	7	7	7	8
Miami-Dade	112	116	118	125
North Florida	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Okaloosa-Walton	3	5	4	5
Palm Beach	9	9	9	11
Pasco Hernando	7	8	8	8
Pensacola	16	15	15	16
Polk	4.5	4.5	4.5	4
St. Johns River	2334	2259	2453	2254
St. Petersburg	25	26	26	26
Santa Fe	33	33	33	33
Seminole	9	9	9	9
South Florida	2	2	2	2
Tallahassee	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Valencia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

TABLE 3

Q-12. INDICATE THE VACANCY RATE AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE FULL-TIME POSITIONS FOR GROUPINGS LISTED.

CATEGORY GROUPS	COLLEGES	UNIVERSITIES
Director, Assoc. Director Asst. Director, Coordinator		
0 - 25%	22	5
26 - 50%	1	3
51 - 75%	0	1
76 - 100%	2	0
No Response	3	0
Other Professional Staff		
0 - 25%	20	3
26 - 50%	3	5
51 - 75%	0	0
76 - 100%	0	0
No Response	5	1
Clerical, Secretarial Systems Analyst		
0 - 25%	23	3
26 - 50%	1	4
51 - 75%	1	2
76 - 100%	1	0
No Response	2	0
All Other		
0 - 25%	11	5
26 - 50%	1	1
51 - 75%	2	0
76 - 100%	3	0
No Response	11	3

Source: Postsecondary Education Planning Commission staff analysis of raw data collected from a survey of financial aid office directors, 1989.

TABLE 4

Q-15. HOW DO YOU MEASURE THE PRODUCTIVITY OF YOUR STAFF?

	COLLEGES	UNIVERSITIES
Number of Students Served	16	5
Number of Applications Processed	15	6
Overtime Hours Accumulated	5	2
Reassignment of Tasks	7	4
Unfinished or Delayed Tasks	11	6
Other (Specify)	9	0
We Do Not Measure Productivity	9	2

Others Specified:

Community Colleges
1. Number of Student Complaints
2. Audit
3. Personal Observation
4. Comprehensive Annual Written Review
5. Computer Input Needs
6. Computer Generated Reports
7. Objectives Met
8. Student Satisfaction
9. How Well Job Requirements are Executed

TABLE 5

Q-16. HOW DO YOU DETERMINE THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL PERMANENT POSITIONS?

	TOTAL	COLLEGES	UNIVERSITIES
Number of Students Served	27	21	6
Number of Applicants Processed	30	23	7
Overtime Hours Accumulated	16	13	3
Reassignment of Tasks	13	9	4
Unfinished or Delayed Tasks	26	20	6
Other (Specify)	14	11	3

Others Specified:

Community Colleges
1. Additional Tasks Required by State and Federal Regulations *(4)
2. Number of Student Complaints *(2)
3. When Upper-Level Administrators Approve Additional Personnel
4. Computer Input Needs
5. Staff Formula Based on the Number of Financial Aid Offers Made
6. N/A for "Other" (2)

Universities
1. Workloads
2. Problem Programs (GSU)
3. N/A (1)

TABLE 6

Q-19 & Q-20. HOW MANY FINANCIAL AID RECIPIENTS AND APPLICANTS (UNDUPLICATED HEADCOUNT) DID YOUR INSTITUTION HAVE IN 1988-89?

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

INSTITUTION	APPLICANTS	RECIPIENTS
FAMU	8,879	4,514
FAU	4,639	2,688
FIU	11,364	4,637
FSU	17,790	12,782
UCF	10,100	62,500
UF	18,679	18,440
UNF	2,521	1,295
USF	11,880	8,719
UWF	3,959	1,790

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

INSTITUTIONS	APPLICANTS	RECIPIENTS
Brevard	2,346	1,876
Broward	4,700	4,500
Central Florida	2,100	1,400
Chipola	901	722
Daytona Beach	8,500	7,600
Edison	1,484	1,683
Fl Comm. College @ Jax	3,000	3,000
Florida Keys	479	352
Gulf Coast	1,950	1,015
Hillsborough	4,349	2,313
Indian River	1,350	1,094
Lake City	936	571
Lake-Sumter	500	457
Manatee	4,300	3,200
Miami-Dade	19,438	15,803
North Florida	325	300
Okalossa-Walton	3,126	2,741
Palm Beach	2,539	1,711
Pasco-Hernando	1,496	1,000
Pensacola	2,534	1,865
Polk	1,663	1,463
St. Johns River	800	500
St. Petersburg	6,533	4,576
Santa Fe	5,776	2,961
Seminole	8,493	7,307
South Florida	1,300	850
Tallahassee	1,750	1,037
Valencia	6,800	5,500

Source: Postsecondary Education Planning Commission staff analysis of raw data collected from a survey of financial aid office directors, 1989.

TABLE 7

Q-24. HOW IS YOUR FINANCIAL AID PROCESS EVALUATED?

ACTIVITY	COMMUNITY COLLEGES	UNIVERSITY
External evaluator from within the institution	5	0
External evaluator not from the institution	7	1
Internal (within the Office) formal evaluation	10	2
Internal (within the Office) informal evaluation	16	7
Student questionnaires	10	4
Student interviews	5	2
Employee interviews	6	2
Other	5	3
Do not evaluate the application process	4	0

Source: Postsecondary Education Planning Commission staff analysis of raw data collected from a survey of financial aid office directors, 1989.

TABLE 8

Q-31. Indicate the extent to which each task listed below is computerized in your office.

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM				COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM			
TASK	NOT AT ALL	SOMEWHAT	COMPLETELY	TASK	NOT AT ALL	SOMEWHAT	COMPLETELY
Notification of award	0	1	8	Notification of award	11	6	11
Disbursement	0	5	4	Disbursement	5	13	10
Tracking of documents	0	0	9	Tracking of documents	12	8	8
Statistical analyses and reporting	1	6	2	Statistical analyses and reporting	6	18	4
Stafford certification	0	5	4	Stafford certification	18	6	4
Management of funds	1	6	2	Management of funds	8	8	12
Analysis of need	2	2	5	Analysis of need	14	8	6
Verification	5	2	2	Verification	24	2	2
Staff training/orientation	7	2	0	Staff training/orientation	22	6	0
Student academic progress reviews	2	4	3	Student academic progress reviews	5	18	5
Inadequate/missing information	1	5	3	Inadequate/missing information	15	11	2
Packaging of awards	2	3	4	Packaging of awards	18	9	1
Loan collection	5	3	1	Loan collection	21	5	2
Financial aid transcripts	0	0	9	Financial aid transcripts	18	8	2
FISAP	1	0	8	FISAP	4	14	10
Mass mailings	4	3	2	Mass mailings	14	13	1
Other	2	1	1	Other	2	4	1

TABLE 9

Q-32. The tasks identified as need new or expanded computerization to improve program administration efficiency and effectiveness were:

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM		COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM	
TASK	NUMBER OF TIMES RANKED	TASK	NUMBER OF TIMES RANKED
Notification of award	1	Notification of award	7
Disbursement	3	Disbursement	6
Tracking of documents	1	Tracking of documents	11
Statistical analyses and reporting	0	Statistical analyses and reporting	8
Stafford certification	0	Stafford certification	3
Management of funds	1	Management of funds	3
Analysis of need	2	Analysis of need	3
Verification	5	Verification	2
Staff training/orientation	0	Staff training/orientation	2
Student academic progress reviews	4	Student academic progress reviews	6
Inadequate/missing information	0	Inadequate/missing information	3
Packaging of awards	3	Packaging of awards	9
Loan collection	1	Loan collection	0
Financial aid transcripts	0	Financial aid transcripts	12
FISAP	0	FISAP	1
Mass mailings	0	Mass mailings	0
Other	6	Other	5

APPENDIX B

Results of Survey of Students in
Public Community Colleges and Universities

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PLANNING COMMISSION

STUDENT SURVEY

The 1989 Legislature directed the Commission to examine a number of student-focused issues. These issues were highly related in terms of student campus experiences: Registration, Advisement, and Financial Aid. In order to meet the various studies' requirements efficiently and appropriately as well as provide for student evaluation of selected services, a single survey questionnaire was developed by Commission staff with assistance from institutional and State administrators as well as local practitioners. The student survey was conducted to obtain a sample of the opinions of undergraduate students in Florida's public community colleges and universities. The following section describes the procedures used to collect the data and survey results. Raw data in tabular form relevant to this particular study are displayed in attached tables.

Student Sample

Eight institutions were selected for inclusion in the survey on the basis of their ability to provide a balanced geographical and demographic profile of the state. The institutions included were: 1) Miami-Dade Community College, 2) North Florida Community College, 3) Edison Community College, 4) Valencia Community College, 5) St. Johns River Community College, 6) Florida International University, 7) Florida State University, and 8) the University of Central Florida. Based on 1987-88 data, 62 percent of Florida's total public postsecondary FTE enrollment was enrolled in the Community College System (CCS) while the remaining 38 percent was enrolled in the State University System (SUS). This proportional distribution was retained in the sample. The size of the student sample at participating institutions was determined on the basis of the total student FTE enrollment each contributed to the student sample. Table 1 illustrates the percent of FTE enrollment each institution contributed to the total as well as the number of surveys distributed for completion. Because the FTE enrollment was lower than expected at both St. Johns River Community College and North Florida Community College, the number of surveys distributed was doubled to increase the validity of the sample. In the analysis of the results, a statistical weight was assigned to the surveys collected from these two institutions to compensate for the extra number distributed. A total of 1031 surveys were distributed among the eight participating institutions; a 77 percent response rate was obtained.

Survey Instrument and Procedures

The student questionnaire was divided into four sections covering basic demographic information and questions about registration processes, class size and advising, and financial aid. Most of the questions required a forced choice response. A few items offered students an opportunity to clarify or write their own response. The questions included on the draft survey were created by Commission staff based upon relevant issues suggested by the legislative charge or the background literature.

TABLE 1

SURVEY DISTRIBUTION

INSTITUION	FTE ENROLLMENT	PERCENT OF FTE ENROLLMENT	NUMBER OF SURVEYS DISTRIBUTED	NUMBER OF SURVEYS RETURNED
Universities				
Florida International	8,900	25	94	84
Florida State	16,300	47	177	155
Central Florida	9,800	28	105	96
Total	35,000	100	376	335
Community Colleges				
Edison	3,300	8	50	26
Miami-Dade	27,500	67	387	260
North Florida *	900	2	12	12
St. Johns River *	1,300	3	19	31
Valencia	8,100	20	125	130
Total	41,200	100	624	459
Total				
State Universities	89,157	38	376	335
Community Colleges	144,866	62	624	459

*Actual number of surveys distributed was 24 at North Florida and 38 at St. Johns River. A statistical weight was used to compensate for the additional number in the data analysis.

A preliminary draft of the survey instrument was circulated among staff of the Board of Regents, the State Board of Community Colleges, the State Council of Student Body Presidents, and the participating institutions. In addition, the instrument was reviewed by individuals with expertise in survey research methodology. A copy of the final survey instrument is appended. The revised survey instrument was pilot tested at Florida State University in September. Commission staff coordinated with the Vice President for Academic Affairs or the Director of Institutional Research at participating institutions in the distribution and completion of the questionnaires. The survey process involved day and evening as well as upper and lower division classes in business, English and mathematics.

The survey data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, (SPSSX). Descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions and percentages for each question and response category were calculated. Further investigation into the differences between the responses of different categories of students as well as universities and community colleges was conducted when warranted.

Institution_____
Class Prefix/Number_____
Class Hours_____

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PLANNING COMMISSION
STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE
1989-90

Directions: Please read and complete each item carefully. Check [ ] only one response unless otherwise indicated. Thank you for your response to this questionnaire.

1. Gender: [ ] Female [ ] Male

2. Class status: [ ] Freshman [ ] Junior [ ] Graduate level
[ ] Sophomore [ ] Senior [ ] Other

3. Degree you are currently working toward:

[ ] AA [ ] Bachelor's [ ] Doctorate [ ] Certificate
[ ] AS [ ] Master's [ ] Other (Specify)_____

4. Your age: [ ] Below 17 [ ] 25-33 [ ] 45-64
[ ] 17-24 [ ] 34-44 [ ] Over 64

5. Your current grade point average: [ ] Below 2.00 [ ] 3.00-3.49
[ ] 2.00-2.49 [ ] 3.50-4.00
[ ] 2.50-2.99 [ ] Unknown

6. Race: [ ] White Non-Hispanic [ ] Asian American/Pacific Islander
[ ] Black Non-Hispanic [ ] American Indian/Alaskan Native
[ ] Hispanic [ ] Other (Specify)_____

7. Are you an in-state or out-of-state resident?

[ ] In-state [ ] Out-of-state/not U.S. citizen
[ ] Out-of-state/U.S. Citizen

8. For financial aid purposes, are you considered dependent on your parents?

[ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Don't know

9. Is English your native language? [ ] Yes [ ] No

10. How many semester credit hours are you currently taking?

[ ] 1-6 [ ] 7-11 [ ] 12-15 [ ] over 15

11. (a) Are you currently employed? [ ] Yes [ ] No **If No**, move to Question 12.

(b) **If Yes**, are you working over 20 hours a week? [ ] Yes [ ] No

12. (a) Are you a transfer student?

[ ] Yes [ ] No **If No**, move to Question 13.

(b) What type of institution did you transfer from?

[ ] Florida public university [ ] Florida public community college
[ ] Florida private college or university [ ] Other (Specify)_____

13. Are you a disabled student? [ ] Yes [ ] No

Registration and Advisement

14. When did you register for your Fall 1989 classes?

[ ] Advanced registration (Spring or Summer 1989)
[ ] Regular registration (before classes began) Fall 1989
[ ] Late registration Fall 1989

15. **Please answer the following question if you are a state university student.**

(a) Are you familiar with the Student Academic Support System (SASS) which provides a computerized listing of your program of studies?

[ ] Yes [ ] No **If No**, move on to Question 17.

(b) Have you used SASS for advisement purposes?

[ ] Yes [ ] No **If No**, move on to Question 17.

(c) In your opinion, how useful is SASS for advisement purposes?

[ ] Useful [ ] Not useful [ ] Not sure

16. **Please answer the following question if you are a community college student.**

(a) Are you familiar with the Student On-Line Advisement and Articulation System (SOLAR) which provides a computerized listing of specific program prerequisites?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

(b) Have you used SOLAR for advisement purposes?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

(c) Did you use another computerized advisement system at your college?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

17. In your opinion, how useful are automated advisement systems for planning your academic programs?

[ ] Useful [ ] Not useful [ ] Not sure

18. (a) Did you meet with an advisor for course scheduling and advising prior to registration for Fall 1989 classes?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

(b) **If Yes**, did you meet with: (Check all that apply)

[ ] A faculty advisor
[ ] A student (peer) advisor
[ ] An academic (professional) advisor at an advising center
[ ] Other (Specify)_____

(c) **If No**, why didn't you receive course advisement prior to registration?

[ ] Chose not to meet with my advisor
[ ] Did not know where to go
[ ] Did not have time
[ ] Other (Specify)_____
[ ] Did not need advisement
[ ] Could not make appointment with an advisor

(d) How satisfied are you with the academic advising you have received from your institution?

[ ] Very satisfied
[ ] Dissatisfied
[ ] Satisfied
[ ] Very dissatisfied
[ ] Neither satisfied or dissatisfied

19. (a) Have you received career counseling from your present institution?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

(b) **If Yes**, did you meet with: (Check all that apply)

[ ] A faculty member
[ ] A professional career counselor
[ ] A trained student peer counselor
[ ] Other (Specify)_____

(c) How satisfied are you with the career counseling you received from your institution?

[ ] Very satisfied
[ ] Dissatisfied
[ ] Satisfied
[ ] Very dissatisfied
[ ] Neither satisfied or dissatisfied

20. What suggestions do you have for improvements in either academic or career advising at your institution?

Academic Advising:_____

_____

Career Advising:_____

_____

21. (a) Did you participate in the Drop and Add process during Fall 1989?

[ ] Yes [ ] No **If No**, please move to Question 22.

(b) If you dropped a class in Fall 1989, please mark the **major** reason you had for dropping the class.

[ ] Class conflicted with work schedule
[ ] Class not held at convenient time
[ ] Did not meet prerequisite for course
[ ] Changed choice of courses
[ ] Changed program of study
[ ] Professor was too hard
[ ] Professor was too easy
[ ] Other (Specify)_____

(c) Did you end up with fewer classes than you wanted as the result of the drop and add process?

[ ] Yes [ ] No **If No**, move on to Question 22.

(d) **If Yes**, how many classes were you <u>not</u> able to replace with **any** other course offerings for Fall 1989.

[ ] Zero [ ] One [ ] Two [ ] Three [ ] More than three

22. (a) After you had selected the courses you wanted to take, how much time did you spend on going through the registration process?

[ ] Less than one hour
[ ] 1 - 2 hours
[ ] 2 - 3 hours
[ ] 3 - 8 hours
[ ] More than 8 hours

(b) How did you register?

[ ] Phone
[ ] In person by on-line terminal
[ ] Mail
[ ] Other (Specify)_____

23. Indicate your level of satisfaction with the registration process at your institution.

[ ] Very satisfied
[ ] Satisfied
[ ] Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
[ ] Dissatisfied
[ ] Very dissatisfied

<u>Class Size</u>

24. Have you ever been in a college class larger than 100? [ ] Yes [ ] No

25. Have you ever been in a college class smaller than 30? [ ] Yes [ ] No

26. If you answered **No** to either of the above, move on to Item 27. If you answered **Yes** to both of the above, complete the next set of items using the following scale.

1 - Much greater in small classes
2 - Greater in small classes
3 - No difference in the small or large classes
4 - Greater in large classes
5 - Much greater in large classes

	1	2	3	4	5
a. Overall quality of the classes	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
b. Quality of instruction	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
c. Personal relationship with instructor	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
d. Chance to make a contribution in class	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
e. Chance to ask a question in class	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
f. Ability to see or hear the instructor	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
g. Amount of material learned	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
h. Personal satisfaction with the class	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
i. Personal concentration on the subject matter/lecture	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
j. Use of teaching assistants as the primary instructor	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
k. Amount of work assigned	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
l. Chance to receive a high grade	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

27. In large classes that utilize small discussion groups in addition to the regular large class section, the discussion groups have: (Check all that apply)

[ ] Added to my understanding of the class curriculum
[ ] Helped me make a better grade
[ ] Did not help me in any way
[ ] I had no classes of this kind

28. If given a choice, I would:

[ ] Enroll in small classes
[ ] Enroll in large classes
[ ] Enroll in large classes with discussion groups
[ ] Depends on the subject matter or course
[ ] Enroll in either - does not matter

Financial Aid

29. When did you first receive information about financial aid for college?

[ ] In high school from high school counselors
[ ] In high school from college/university personnel
[ ] During college orientation activities before classes started
[ ] I never received information about financial aid for college

30. (a) Have you personally used the state-wide computerized information system CHOICES? [ ] Yes [ ] No

(b) **If Yes**, how helpful was CHOICES?

[ ] Helpful [ ] Not helpful [ ] Not sure

(c) Have you personally used any other computerized system for financial aid information?

[ ] Yes, (Specify)_____
[ ] No

(d) **If Yes**, how helpful was this system?

[ ] Helpful [ ] Not helpful [ ] Not sure

31. Have you ever applied for financial aid at your institution?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

If you answered <u>No</u> to the above question, you have completed this survey. If you answered <u>Yes</u>, please continue.

32. Have you tried to contact the Financial Aid Office at this institution for information? [ ] Yes [ ] No

33. How have you found phone communication with the Financial Aid Office?

[ ] I have not tried to call the Financial Aid Office
[ ] It is easy to get through to Financial Aid by phone
[ ] It takes several tries to get through to the Financial Aid Office
[ ] It is almost impossible to contact Financial Aid by phone

34. (a) How long did you usually have to wait before you were helped in the Financial Aid Office?

[ ] Less than 10 minutes
[ ] 10 to 15 minutes
[ ] Over 15 minutes

(b) If you had to wait over 15 minutes, why did you usually have to wait that long? (Check all that apply)

[ ] Lots of students before me [ ] Computer problems
[ ] No one was around to help me
[ ] Other (Specify)_____

35. A counselor is an employee in the Financial Aid Office who provides accurate, timely, and in-depth information about <u>your</u> financial aid situation and explains your options. Have you had an individual or personal meeting with a counselor from the financial aid office at your institution?

[ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] I never visited the office

36. If you received a student financial aid loan, did the Financial Aid Office provide you with counseling on repayment for this loan?

[ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Didn't get a loan

37. Indicate your level of satisfaction with the following services at the Financial Aid Office using the scale below:

1 - Very satisfied
2 - Somewhat satisfied
3 - Somewhat dissatisfied
4 - Very dissatisfied
5 - Does not apply

	1	2	3	4	5
a. Printed Materials	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
b. Timely notification of the award	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
c. Timely receipt of the award	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
d. Adequacy of financial aid counseling	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
e. Hours the Office is open	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
f. Location of the Office	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
g. Information on my right to contest an award decision	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

38. Does the Financial Aid Office distribute information about financial aid opportunities available through academic departments?

[ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Don't Know

39. In general, how would you rate the staff at the Financial Aid Office? (Check one column for each word in the first column)

	Always	Sometimes	Never
Courteous	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Helpful	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Knowledgeable	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

40. The above questions focused on your opinions about how financial aid is administered at this institution. Feel free to add comments on the administration of financial aid programs. Use the space below.

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PLANNING COMMISSION

RESULTS OF SURVEY OF STUDENTS
FALL 1989

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

	TOTAL N	TOTAL %	COLLEGES N	COLLEGES %	UNIVERSITIES N	UNIVERSITIES %
Gender						
Female	427	54.1	255	56.1	172	51.5
Male	362	45.9	200	43.9	162	48.5
Missing	6	-	5	-	1	-
Class Status						
Freshman	383	49.3	237	53.4	146	43.8
Sophomore	189	24.3	164	36.9	25	7.5
Junior	109	14.0	17	3.7	92	27.6
Senior	68	8.7	8	1.7	60	18.0
Graduate	16	2.1	7	1.6	9	2.7
Other	13	1.6	12	2.6	1	.3
Missing	18	-	16	-	2	-
Degree Sought						
AA	307	40.0	287	64.9	20	6.2
AS	98	12.7	93	21.0	5	1.5
Bachelor's	307	40.1	40	9.1	267	82.2
Master's	34	4.4	7	1.5	27	8.3
Doctorate	7	.9	3	.7	4	1.2
Other	8	1.0	6	1.2	0.0	0.0
Certificate	8	1.0	8	1.7	2	.6
Missing	27	-	17	-	10	-
Age						
Below 17	2	.3	1	2.0	1	.3
17-24	606	77.2	316	69.8	290	87.3
25-33	114	14.5	88	19.5	26	7.8
24-44	52	6.6	39	8.5	13	3.9
45-64	9	1.1	9	2.0	0.0	0.0
Over 64	2	.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Missing	10	-	7	-	3	-
GPA						
Below 2.00	17	2.2	12	2.7	5	1.5
2.00-2.49	107	13.8	69	15.4	38	11.5
2.50-2.99	171	22.0	103	23.0	68	20.5
3.00-3.49	210	27.0	104	23.3	106	32.0
3.50-4.00	112	14.4	58	13.0	54	16.3
Unknown	161	20.7	101	22.6	60	18.1
Missing	16	-	12	-	4	-
Race						
White/Non-Hispanic	436	55.8	201	44.6	235	71.2
Black/Non-Hispanic	105	13.4	86	19.0	19	5.8
Hispanic	201	25.7	138	30.6	63	19.1
Asian American/Pacific Islander	25	3.2	15	3.3	10	3.0
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	1	.1	1	.2	0.0	0.0
Other	14	1.7	11	2.3	3	.9
Missing	13	-	8	-	5	-
Resident Status						
In-State	690	88.0	391	86.7	299	89.8
Out-of-State, Non U.S. Citizen	40	5.1	16	3.5	24	7.2
Out-of-State, U.S. Citizen	54	6.9	44	9.8	10	3.0
Missing	10	-	8	-	2	-
Dependent Status						
Yes	421	53.8	202	44.8	219	66.0
No	323	41.3	223	49.6	100	30.1
Don't know	38	4.9	25	5.6	13	3.9
Missing	12	-	9	-	3	-
English Native Language						
Yes	584	74.4	297	65.6	287	86.4
No	200	25.5	156	34.4	44	13.3
Missing	9	-	6	-	3	-

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

	TOTAL N	TOTAL %	COLLEGES N	COLLEGES %	UNIVERSITIES N	UNIVERSITIES %
Semester Hours						
1-6	126	16.0	97	21.4	29	8.7
7-11	132	16.8	112	24.8	20	6.0
12-15	467	59.7	208	46.2	259	78.0
Over 15	59	7.5	35	7.7	4	7.2
Missing	11	-	8	-	3	-
Employed						
Yes	508	64.8	331	73.0	177	53.6
No	275	35.1	123	27.0	152	46.1
Missing	11	-	6	-	5	-
Employed 20 Hours Per Week						
Yes	371	73.0	267	80.9	104	58.4
No	137	27.0	63	19.1	74	41.6
Missing	286	-	129	-	157	-
Transfer Student						
Yes	181	23.2	75	16.6	106	32.2
No	597	76.8	374	83.4	223	67.8
Missing	17	-	11	-	6	-
Transfer Institution						
Florida Public University	19	9.7	13	14.9	6	5.6
Florida Private College/ University	17	8.4	12	13.1	5	4.6
Florida Public Community College	97	49.4	17	18.9	80	74.1
Other	64	32.5	47	53.1	17	15.7
Missing	598	-	371	-	227	-
Disabled Student						
Yes	17	2.1	12	2.5	5	1.5
No	767	97.9	440	97.5	327	98.5
Missing	10	-	7	-	3	-

FINANCIAL AID

Q-29. When did you first receive information about financial aid for college?

	TOTAL N	TOTAL %	COLLEGES N	COLLEGES %	UNIVERSITIES N	UNIVERSITIES %
In high school from high school counselors	337	44.9	150.	37.0	179	55.4
In high school from college/ university personnel	64	8.5	22	5.1	42	13.0
During college orientation activities before classes started	143	19.0	98	22.8	45	13.9
I never received information about financial aid for college	206	27.4	149	34.9	57	17.6
Missing	43	-	31	-	12	-

Q-30A. Have you personally used the state-wide computerized information system CHOICES?

	TOTAL N	TOTAL %	COLLEGES N	COLLEGES %	UNIVERSITIES N	UNIVERSITIES %
Yes	68	9.0	40	9.3	28	8.6
No	690	91.0	391	90.7	299	91.4
Missing	36	-	28	-	8	-

Q-30B. IF YES, HOW HELPFUL WAS CHOICES?

	TOTAL N	TOTAL %	COLLEGES N	COLLEGES %	UNIVERSITIES N	UNIVERSITIES %
Helpful	45	45.7	26	45.2	19	46.3
Not Helpful	22	22.3	14	24.3	8	19.5
Not Sure	32	32.0	18	30.4	14	34.1
Missing	695	-	401	-	294	-

Q-31C. HAVE YOU PERSONALLY USED ANY OTHER COMPUTERIZED SYSTEM FOR FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION?

	TOTAL N	TOTAL %	COLLEGES N	COLLEGES %	UNIVERSITIES N	UNIVERSITIES %
Yes	24	3.9	13	3.7	11	4.2
No	577	96.1	328	96.3	249	95.8
Missing	194	-	119	-	75	-

Q-30D. IF YES, HOW HELPFUL WAS THIS SYSTEM?

	TOTAL N	TOTAL %	COLLEGES N	COLLEGES %	UNIVERSITIES N	UNIVERSITIES %
Helpful	16	38.6	11	44.9	5	29.4
Not Helpful	9	20.5	4	14.3	5	29.4
Not Sure	17	41.0	10	40.8	7	41.2
Missing	752	-	434	-	318	-

Q-31. HAVE YOU EVER APPLIED FOR FINANCIAL AID AT YOUR INSTITUTION?

	TOTAL N	TOTAL %	COLLEGES N	COLLEGES %	UNIVERSITIES N	UNIVERSITIES %
Yes	294	39.8	162	38.4	132	41.8
No	444	60.2	260	61.6	184	58.2
Missing	57	-	38	-	19	-

Q-32. HAVE YOU TRIED TO CONTACT THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE AT THIS INSTITUTION FOR INFORMATION?

	TOTAL N	TOTAL %	COLLEGES N	COLLEGES %	UNIVERSITIES N	UNIVERSITIES %
Yes	275	82.9	149	82.0	126	84.0
No	56	16.8	32	17.4	24	16.0
Missing	463	-	278	-	185	-

Q-33. HOW HAVE YOU FOUND PHONE COMMUNICATION WITH THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE?

	TOTAL N	TOTAL %	COLLEGES N	COLLEGES %	UNIVERSITIES N	UNIVERSITIES %
I have not tried to call the financial aid office	101	31.5	63	36.0	38	26.0
It is easy to get through to the Financial Aid by phone	79	24.6	58	33.1	21	14.4
It takes several tries to get through to the Financial Aid Office	105	32.7	45	25.7	60	41.1
It is almost impossible to contact the financial aid office by phone	36	11.2	9	5.1	27	18.5
Missing	473	-	284	-	189	-

Q-34A. HOW LONG DID YOU USUALLY HAVE TO WAIT BEFORE YOU WERE HELPED IN THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE?

	TOTAL N	TOTAL %	COLLEGES N	COLLEGES %	UNIVERSITIES N	UNIVERSITIES %
Less than 10 minutes	84	27.5	55	31.7	29	22.0
10 to 15 minutes	95	31.1	56	32.3	39	29.5
Over 15 minutes	126	41.4	62	36.0	64	48.5
Missing	490	-	287	-	203	-

Q-34B 1-4. IF YOU HAD TO WAIT OVER 15 MINUTES, WHY DID YOU USUALLY HAVE TO WAIT THAT LONG?

	TOTAL N	TOTAL %	COLLEGES N	COLLEGES %	UNIVERSITIES N	UNIVERSITIES %
Lots of students before me	168		89		79	
No one was around to help me	35		18		17	
Computer problems	27		12		15	
Other	19		6		13	
Missing						

Q-35. HAVE YOU HAD AN INDIVIDUAL OR PERSONAL MEETING WITH A COUNSELOR FROM THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE AT YOUR INSTITUTION?

	TOTAL N	TOTAL %	COLLEGES N	COLLEGES %	UNIVERSITIES N	UNIVERSITIES %
Yes	154	47.6	112	62.8	42	29.0
No	142	43.9	57	31.8	85	58.6
I never visited the office	28	8.5	10	5.4	18	12.4
Missing	471	-	281	-	190	-

Q-36. IF YOU RECEIVED A STUDENT FINANCIAL AID LOAN, DID THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE PROVIDE YOU WITH COUNSELING ON REPAYMENT FOR THIS LOAN?

	TOTAL N	TOTAL %	COLLEGES N	COLLEGES %	UNIVERSITIES N	UNIVERSITIES %
Yes	84	27.6	59	35.0	25	18.5
No	74	24.5	35	21.0	39	28.9
Didn't get a loan	145	47.8	74	44.0	71	52.6
Missing	492	-	292	-	200	-

Q-37. INDICATE YOUR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH THE FOLLOWING SERVICES AT THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE.

		TOTAL		COLLEGES		UNIVERSITIES	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
37-A.	**Printed Materials**						
	Very satisfied	86	30.6	62	41.5	24	18.2
	Somewhat satisfied	135	47.8	66	43.8	69	52.3
	Somewhat dissatisfied	31	11.0	11	7.4	20	15.2
	Very dissatisfied	6	2.1	2	1.3	4	3.0
	Does not apply	24	8.5	9	6.0	15	11.4
	Missing	512	-	309	-	203	-
37-B.	**Timely Notification of Award**						
	Very satisfied	63	22.6	46	31.6	17	12.8
	Somewhat satisfied	92	33.2	50	40.3	34	25.6
	Somewhat dissatisfied	50	17.9	21	14.2	29	21.8
	Very dissatisfied	37	13.2	8	5.2	29	21.8
	Does not apply	37	13.2	13	8.7	24	18.0
	Missing	517	-	315	-	202	-
37-C.	**Timely Receipt of Award**						
	Very satisfied	53	19.2	42	29.0	11	8.4
	Somewhat satisfied	85	30.8	50	34.5	35	26.7
	Somewhat dissatisfied	51	18.3	25	16.9	26	19.8
	Very dissatisfied	43	15.4	14	9.3	29	22.1
	Does not apply	45	16.3	15	10.3	30	22.9
	Missing	518	-	314	-	204	-
37-D.	**Adequacy of financial aid counseling**						
	Very satisfied	50	17.8	48	31.7	2	1.5
	Somewhat satisfied	99	35.2	60	39.6	39	30.0
	Somewhat dissatisfied	66	23.4	26	17.2	40	30.8
	Very dissatisfied	36	12.8	7	4.6	29	22.3
	Does not apply	31	10.8	11	6.9	20	15.4
	Missing	512	-	307	-	205	-
37-E.	**Hours the Office is open**						
	Very satisfied	82	29.2	61	41.4	21	15.8
	Somewhat satisfied	123	43.9	69	46.8	54	40.6
	Somewhat dissatisfied	36	12.7	8	5.1	28	21.1
	Very dissatisfied	22	7.8	6	4.1	16	12.0
	Does not apply	18	6.4	4	2.7	14	10.5
	Missing	513	-	311	-	202	-
37-F.	**Location of the Office**						
	Very satisfied	110	39.8	75	50.3	35	27.6
	Somewhat satisfied	121	43.8	58	38.9	63	49.6
	Somewhat dissatisfied	16	5.8	4	2.7	12	9.4
	Very dissatisfied	8	2.9	4	2.7	4	3.1
	Does not apply	21	7.6	8	5.4	13	10.2
	Missing	519	-	311	-	208	-
37-G.	**Information on my right to contest an award decision**						
	Very satisfied	48	18.2	35	26.2	13	10.0
	Somewhat satisfied	67	25.2	45	33.3	22	16.9
	Somewhat dissatisfied	39	14.6	13	9.4	26	20.0
	Very dissatisfied	40	15.2	11	8.2	29	22.3
	Does not apply	71	26.8	31	22.8	40	30.8
	Missing	530	-	325	-	205	-

Q-38. DOES THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT FINANCIAL AID OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS?

	TOTAL		COLLEGES		UNIVERSITIES	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	73	23.0	43	24.8	30	20.8
No	71	22.5	40	23.3	31	21.5
Don't know	172	54.5	89	51.9	83	57.6
Missing	478	-	287	-	191	-

Q-39. IN GENERAL, HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE STAFF AT THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE?

	TOTAL		COLLEGES		UNIVERSITIES	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Courteous						
Always	125	43.3	73	46.6	52	39.4
Sometimes	155	53.6	79	50.2	76	57.6
Never	9	3.1	5	3.2	4	3.0
Missing	505	-	302	-	203	-
Helpful						
Always	129	43.7	90	55.2	39	29.5
Sometimes	152	51.5	69	42.3	83	62.9
Never	14	4.8	4	2.5	10	7.6
Missing	500	-	297	-	203	-
Knowledgeable						
Always	103	36.1	73	47.2	30	22.9
Sometimes	168	58.7	77	49.5	91	69.5
Never	15	5.3	5	3.2	10	7.6
Missing	508	-	304	-	204	-

APPENDIX C

Florida Student Financial Aid
Advisory Council

Postsecondary Education Planning Commission
Program Committee Meeting

October 1989

Florida Student Financial Aid Advisory Council

- Forerunner of current council
- Created in 1975 to advise the Commissioner of Education about financial aid-related matters
- Comprised of nine financial aid administrators and one student
- Sunset in 1978 and re-established in 1981

Florida Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors

- 1983
  - Name changed
  - Membership increased to sixteen including two students
  - Required to meet quarterly and at least times per year with the Commissioner of Education
- 1987
  - Membership reduced to 14 members
  - Required to submit annual report to the Commissioner, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House
- 1989
  - Requirement to meet with the Commissioner of Education reduced to once a year

Postsecondary Education Planning Commission
Program Committee Meeting

October 1989

Florida Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors

- **Current Membership**
  - Two representatives from the following sectors:
    - lending community
    - post-secondary education
    - private, independent college financial aid administrators
    - state university system financial aid administrators
    - community college financial aid administrators
    - proprietary/vocational-technical financial aid administrators
  - One representative from the following:
    - lay citizens
    - full-time students
  - All serve four year terms except the student who serves a two year term

Florida Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors

- **Issues Addressed by Previous Committees**
  - Defaults
    - Recommended that OSFA notify schools when a student is delinquent but prior to default
    - OSFA should provide more consumer information about loan deferment opportunities
    - Accept partial payments and consider the student as delinquent but not in default
    - Create a toll-free information telephone line
  - Florida Student Assistance Grant
    - Raise the maximum award to $1700 and tie future increases to state higher education appropriations
    - Create separate grant programs for the private, public, and proprietary/vo-tech sectors
    - Publish annual report explaining how eligibility and awards were determined
    - Reduce reporting and paperwork

Postsecondary Education Planning Commission
Program Committee Meeting

October 1989

Florida Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors

- Issues Addressed by Previous Committees
  - Consumer Information
    - OSFA should make financial aid information dissemination a high priority
    - Increase the emphasis on financial aid information to minority students
    - Utilize service organizations to help "spread the word"
    - Promote financial aid awareness activities
  - Alternative Funding Programs
    - Create a tuition prepayment program
    - Develop a loan program with capital provided by private, foundation and corporate sources, to assist students who do not qualify for federal aid

Florida Council of Student Financial Aid Advisors

- Current Issues
  - Student loan indebtedness
  - Early awareness
  - Need vs. merit
  - FSAG as a campus-based program

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State of Florida
Department of Education
Tallahassee, Florida
Betty Castor, Commissioner
Affirmative action/equal opportunity employer